PRETTY ACTRESSES PICTURED AT PLAY See Page

The July

ROYAL

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FOR

PICTURE PUZZLES

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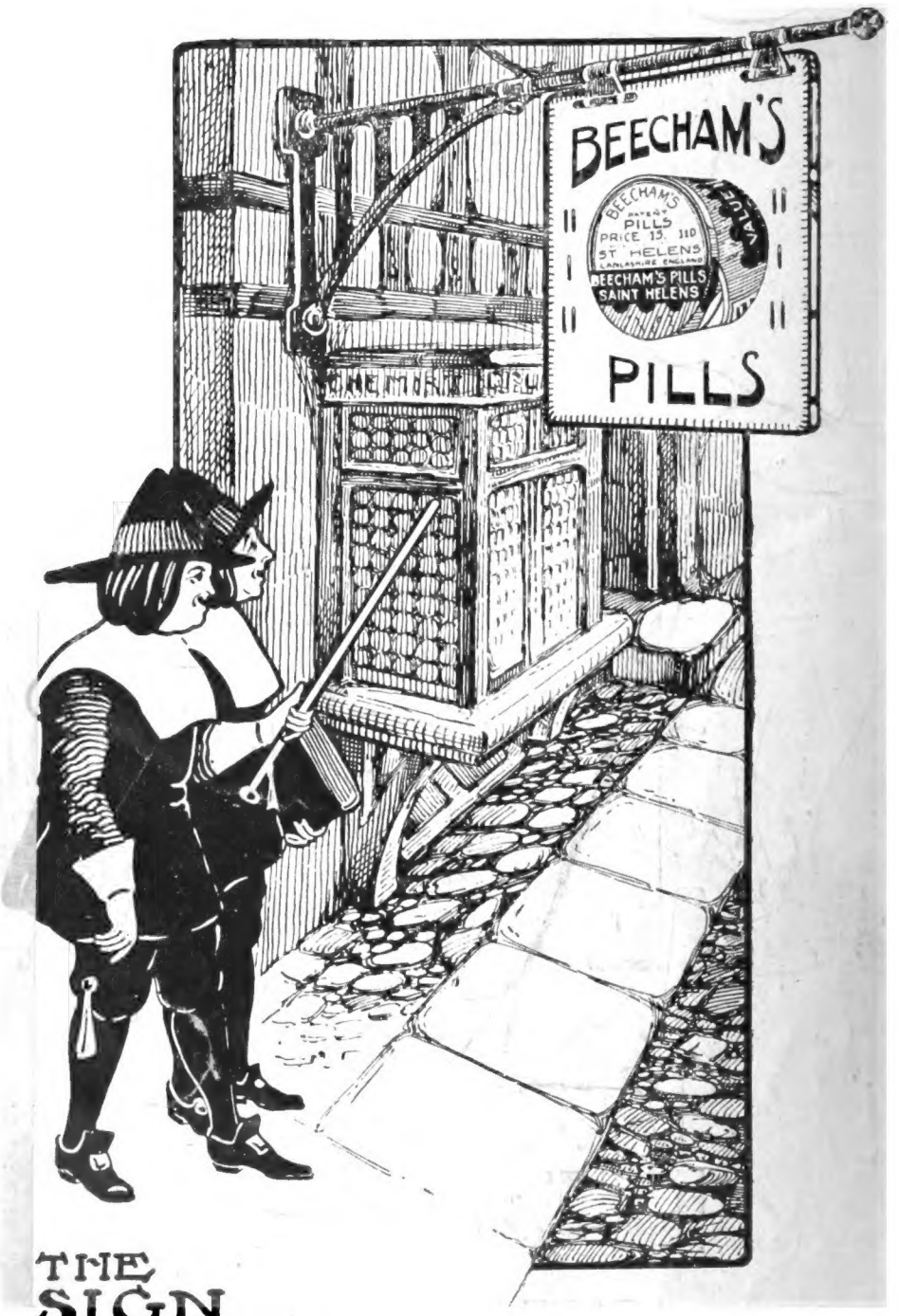

THE SIGN OF HEALTH

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Photo *Elwin Neame.*

Miss Evelyn Hope, a beautiful Old Bensonian, who has won fame at the Savoy Theatre in the recent production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

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"WHICH HAND WILL YOU HAVE?"

From the Painting by Mme. Lee Raiwes.

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My Favourite Summer Sport

Hot Weather Hobbies of Charming Actresses.

PHYLLIS RELPH.

Truly enterprising, pretty Miss Phyllis Relph has taken up motor-cycling with great zest, and says her 6 h.p. Royal Enfield is simply delightful. With her husband, Mr. Lionel Atwill, she goes for many long trips, taking turns to sit in the side-car. If the weather is kind these energetic "mummers" hope to spend their summer holiday on a motor-cycling tour, and have planned a lovely journey, with a fresh resting place each night.

Photo Elwin Neame.

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GLADYS BRENDA.

Miss Gladys Brenda is a beautiful young actress who will certainly be one of the "stars" of the future. Having graduated at the Academy of Dramatic Art, she played in the "Marionettes" and afterwards in "Peter Pan" and "Quality Street" at the Duke of York's Theatre. Next she appeared in "Broadway Jones."

She hopes that theatre work will not stop her playing tennis this summer, for tennis is her favourite hot-weather sport, and she has good reason to like it, for she plays an unusually good game.

Photo *Elwin Neame.*

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ELSIE SPENCER.

Miss Elsie Spencer, one of the prettiest girls at Daly's, says swimming is her favourite summer sport.

She loves it because it is such splendid exercise, and helps to keep the muscles supple, and develops a graceful figure.

The girls at Daly's have a swimming club of their own, of which Elsie Spencer is a "star" member, owing to her excellent swimming.

Photo *Elvin Neame.*

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ENID SASS.

In her schoolgirl days Miss Enid Sass dreamed of flying, and longed for a pair of wings. Her dream has become real to-day, for she has really flown—on somebody else's wings, or rather, aeroplane.

"It was a glorious sensation," she confesses. "I knew I should love it—and I did. The pace took my breath away at first, but when I got used to it I didn't feel a scrap nervous. In fact, I wanted to go on flying for hours: it is such splendid sport!

"One day, if I am lucky, I hope to have a flying machine of my own, and use my 'wings' whenever I feel inclined."

Photo *Elwin Neame.*

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WINIFRED BARNES.

George Edwardes has discovered a new star—and a beautiful one—in Miss Winifred Barnes, the young actress who became leading lady at Daly's, the theatre where she played with so much success as an understudy, and got her first big chance. Winnie Barnes adores motoring, and is learning to drive her own car. In this picture you see her in her new two-seater, La Ponette, in which she has motored all over England—and Wales, too!

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LYDIA BILBROOKE.

Once upon a time Miss Lydia Bilbrooke used to detest golf; that was before she attempted to play the royal and ancient game. Now she simply loves it, but golf does not love her, for she is finding it hard to master!

Her husband Mr. Reginald Owen, is a fine player, and after much persuasion induced his beautiful wife to try her hand at this enthralling game. One try was quite enough to convince Miss Bilbrooke that she must learn golf, and now she regards it as the finest sport in the world, for any time of year!

Photo *Claude Harris.*

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SARI PETRASS.

This beautiful Hungarian "star," who has been shining for many months at Daly's Theatre, chooses riding as her favourite summer—or winter—sport. Since she has made London her home, Rotten Row has become her "practice ground," for she could not exist happily without a daily canter.

Miss Petrass learnt English in almost record time in order to make her first appearance in this country.

Photo *Flem Neame.*

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THE FIRST OF A NEW SERIES OF COMPLETE STORIES.

The Amazing Adventures of Lady Hilda

I.—THE TRYSTING OF GALICIA.

By F. E. Baily.

Lady Hilda was tired of being a Society beauty and yearned for adventure. Rudolf Merion, the war-correspondent, who loved her, took it upon himself to see that she came to no harm. He had all his work cut out, as you will see when you have read this story.

I.

"I would rather be dead than be any man's wife!" declared Lady Hilda Risborough passionately.

"Why?" asked Rudolf Merion.

His companion turned in a gesture of incomparable scorn. Every line of her tall, slender body, all the deeps of her splendid eyes, the whole poise of her dark, imperious head, execrated the silliness of his question.

"Because marriage is the grave of love, and disaster for a woman. While a man longs for her he will call down the very stars from heaven to find an offering worthy of her. Once she is married to him all the worship goes out of his attitude. He doesn't mean to be unromantic, but to come down to the commonplace after one has been really loved——"

She broke off, shrugging her shoulders. The face of the man seemed to become drawn with suffering as he listened.

"Oh, Hilda, Hilda, Hilda!" he murmured.

Her eyes grew very caressing, and her voice very gentle.

"Poor old Rudolf, I'm so sorry. It's so hopeless to love a woman like me; can't you learn to hate me?"

"I? Hate *you?*"

He laughed a little laugh of pure contempt that made her pulses race with exultation in spite of herself.

"Why," he went on, as one who rides gaily at the head of a forlorn hope, "it's not your fault that you can't give me what I want. I'll just go on being your very faithful servant, and if that's to be the end—well, I sought the best in life, and if I can't win it I'm glad I sought it. That's all."

She looked away from him and her eyes were wet. Not being a stupid woman she was able to count the cost of those few quiet words, and the magnitude of it made her afraid.

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"And now," he said presently, "tell me what you're going to do."

Behind the balcony on which they sat stretched the interminable ball-room of Lord Framlingshire's town house. Basano's orchestra throbbed out the Pink Lady waltz from some flower-wreathed shrine with languorous perfection. Hilda's satin-slippered feet marked the time mechanically.

"My dear Rudolf, I'm going to break out, and live. My invalid grandmother is leaving for Switzerland, and the Grosvenor Square house will be shut up, so I've taken a flat in Sloane Street. At last I can turn my music and dancing to account. Lady Hilda Risborough, you will see in to-morrow's papers, is sailing this week for Japan. You will see also that Miss Hilda Glaive, a newly-discovered and highly-gifted dancer, makes her *début* next week in *The Girl from Golders Green*, at the Imperial Theatre. I had to get rid of my title first, you see. Try and work a nice notice about me into your paper."

He laughed and then frowned a little.

"I? Oh, I'm only a war-correspondent. So that's why you wanted the address of a theatrical agent?"

The Pink Lady waltz died away, and a crowd of gasping dancers invaded the balcony. Hilda stared at them distastefully.

"Take me home, Rudolf, there's a dear. Why should I put up with them even for a little longer?"

As her car glided away, a summer dawn tinged the sky with a faint pink.

"Look!" she murmured, "a new day for all, a new life for me—opportunity, no barriers, a fresh world, high adventure. Oh, Rudolf, I'm so happy."

For a moment he let himself picture the new world he longed to spread before her. Then he flung up his chin in the face of misfortune, and waved a gay hand.

"Life's a glorious gamble! Here's to your share of the spoil!" he cried.

II.

As Rudolf Merion dressed for Hilda Glaive's *début*, he took stock of his life because a new epoch lay before him. Having considered the situation he sighed, and rode in a taxi from his flat in Pius Inn to the Imperial Theatre.

There was almost a first night atmosphere about the place on account of the new dancer, whose discovery, skilfully boomed, provided the theatrical sensation of the moment. Rudolf knew everyone and held quite a little reception in the foyer. From his seat in the stalls he glanced about him and recognised enough celebrities to make any newcomer's reputation if she found favour. In the O.P. stage-box lounged a young man about twenty-seven years of age, with black hair and eyes and an evil mouth as soft as a girl's. He was the greatest person in the audience—no other than the King of Galicia, staying at the Galician Embassy incognito.

Hilda must have impressed Edward Buckingham, who stands alone in the production of musical-comedy, for she had been given three dances.

The third was of her own designing. She came on in a dress of softest cherry-hued silk that clung about her beautiful body, and amid a setting of cherry-blossom, danced to the sweet, appealing, tender, old-fashioned air of "Cherry Ripe." Rudolf leant back in his seat with a sigh of delight.

She held the stalks of two cherries between her teeth, and confronted all the sea of faces, laughing in sheer ecstasy because she was happy. The familiar music began, and Hilda danced.

She took everyone with her out into the cherry-orchards, and back from all the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil, into the innocence of childhood. This dark, beautiful girl in her soft pink draperies seemed to hold all the joy of life in the cup of her two little hands. Old sour people smiled wistfully and could not tell why. Hard, cynical business men forgot their shares and business deals and wandered back into the halcyon days of their courtship. Imaginative temperaments experienced an agony of happiness that brought them to the brink of tears.

The dancer's steps became slower, the music saddened a little, as if loth to die. It was all over, leaving her in a half-joyous, half-reluctant pose. Her hands dropped to her sides in a gesture of finality. She ceased.

For a full second there was dead silence in the theatre. Then a great crested wave of applause surged through the whole building. Staid citizens clapped, stamped, and yelled in a frenzy of delight; the King of Galicia flung a mass of priceless roses at the dancer's feet.

She picked them up, and Rudolf alone detected a touch of cynical amusement in her bow of acknowledgment. Then she bowed once more, very prettily and graciously, to the shouting house, and withdrew. Not

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all their excited clamour could induce her to show herself again.

And so Hilda Glaive achieved the purely personal triumph for which she longed.

III.

"No," said Hilda to Merion, a fortnight later, telephoning from the Sloane Street flat. "I can't dine with you to-night, Rudolf. Sorry, but His Galician Majesty has commanded me to appear at the Embassy this evening. I must rest before I dance. I'm going down to Cornwall by the midnight train, though; you can see me off, if you like."

"I'm afraid I can't see you off because I leave for France before midnight. Got to do a flying-competition from the military point of view. I shan't be back till Friday evening. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye, Rudolf! Good luck!" she answered, and hung up the receiver.

At 8 p.m. her taxi stood before the door of the Galician Embassy. It was an old-fashioned house lying back from the pavement, with a semi-circular carriage-drive and a crescent of smooth lawn between it and the garden wall. A courteous diplomat received her, and a Galician maid, who spoke only French beside her native tongue, showed Hilda and her own maid to a sumptuous bedroom at the back of the Embassy.

After a cursory glance of admiration, Hilda dressed for her "Cherry Ripe" dance, which the King had asked for specially, and descended to the drawing-room, where the same charming official took charge of her. One end of the big room had been cleared for her dance, and in a little alcove adjoining, entirely screened from her by banks of flowers, an orchestra played over the air of "Cherry Ripe" *pianissimo*, waiting the signal to begin in earnest.

Hilda glanced at the audience, the lighting, the floor, curtseyed to his Majesty, and signalled for the music. The spectators consisted merely of the King and the Embassy staff. There was only one woman among them, the wife of the First Secretary, and they numbered fewer than a dozen all told.

When she had changed back into an evening-gown Hilda was presented to his Majesty Raymundo X. The conventional word "gracious" conveys a faint idea of the warmth of the royal manner. The King congratulated the now famous dancer fervently, and, after begging permission to clasp on her wrist a jewelled bracelet of ancient Galician workmanship, he implored her to honour him and his entourage by taking supper with them.

It was ten o'clock. Supper would fill in the interval before the departure of the midnight train very satisfactorily. Hilda, accepting the invitation, explained her movements to the King, and sent a message to her maid telling her to return home. A peculiar expression flickered in the royal eyes as his Majesty listened.

"That Cornish holiday, doubtless, explains your refusal to dance for us to-morrow night instead of to-night," he remarked, smiling. "Ah, well, even royalty does willing homage to beauty and genius. Come, my friends, let us sup."

Presently it became time for Hilda to depart. She took a respectful, but cheery, farewell of his Majesty, and the Galician maid again conducted her to the sumptuous bedroom.

"There is one other thing his Majesty has commanded," murmured the maid in French, before handing Hilda her cloak, "if madame will excuse me for a moment."

She went out noiselessly, closing the door behind her.

A few minutes passed; Hilda glanced restlessly at her watch, for time became precious. It was already ten minutes past eleven. She crossed over to the bell and rang. There was no response. She rang again, with the same result. Not a sound could be heard, and the silence began to be oppressive.

"If they won't come I'll go and find them," she told herself, and, walking to the door, turned the handle. Then the mystery of the lagging servants began to be made plain. The door was securely fastened from the outside.

Shaking with fury, Hilda snatched aside the window-curtains. The window looked out into the Embassy gardens, beyond which nothing was visible through a screen of trees. On either side wings of the house jutted out, the walls of which were blank. The sash was immovable, ventilation being effected by small fanlights at the top of the window, and heavy bars, sunk in the wall, ran across the frame.

There could be no mistaking the situation; she was kidnapped.

One other door led into a boudoir and bathroom, but these only communicated with the outer world through the bedroom. They were lighted and ventilated by skylights covered with a steel-wire network.

Hilda examined the sequence of rooms minutely. Then she shrugged her shoulders.

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gave a grim little laugh, and sat down to await developments.

A large wardrobe stood against one wall of the blue and silver bedroom. A quarter-of-an-hour later Hilda heard a faint click, and looked up to see Raymundo X. appearing through what had seemed to be the door of the wardrobe, but was in reality a concealed entrance.

He closed the door, and advanced to her with arms outstretched.

"At last, my beautiful darling," he exclaimed rapturously, "there is no longer any barrier between us!"

IV.

Hilda surveyed the dark, sallow, unhealthy figure with open contempt.

"Your Majesty, my train leaves at midnight. Have the goodness to end this ridiculous situation, and send a servant for a taxi."

His eyes gloated over his beautiful captive.

"The train may leave, but without you, lovely prisoner. Do you suppose, after scheming to capture you, I am going to set you free for the asking? You little know the stuff of which Raymundo, King of Galicia, is made."

He strutted absurdly, and she had hard work not to laugh in spite of her anger.

"Not so," he went on. "I am a king by birth, but you are queen of all the women in the world by divine right. Together we will make the passion of Cleopatra and Antony pale into a mere shadow of mockery. We will enact a love-poem by comparison with which the Song of Solomon shall degenerate into a mere fragment of wayside minstrelsy. We will——"

"I beg your pardon," interrupted Hilda, "we will do nothing of the sort. This is England, not Galicia. The police do not encourage kidnapping in this country. You had better be careful, my friend. Your Latin enthusiasm is carrying you a little too far."

Hilda heard a faint click, and looked up to see Raymundo X. appearing. . . . "At last, my beautiful darling," he exclaimed rapturously, "there is no longer any barrier between us!"

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His lips curled back from his teeth in a smile which laid bare the latent cruelty of the South.

"Let me assure you that there will be no interference from the police. To commence, this is Galician territory, and they have no jurisdiction. But apart from that, consider your position:

"You came here to dance, on your way to Cornwall, and are not expected to return home. No one will inquire, but should they do so they will be told that you left here for Paddington at 11 p.m. You declared you were going to Cornwall, and that is the last we heard of you. There is no means of escape from these apartments, because I designed them specially for the purpose of enshrining little love-birds. Some were unwilling at first, but all became sensible in time. You will do the same, no doubt."

He bowed mockingly. Hilda saw with horror the network of circumstantial evidence close around her. Obviously there was no help to be expected from outside. She must play for time.

"I was present at your *début*, and almost every night since. I have watched your glorious dancing," went on the King with passion. "I swore you should be mine, and now my oath is accomplished."

She flung out a deprecating hand.

"Your Majesty is overwhelming," she declared in well-simulated awe. "You can imagine my mingled emotions. It is not everyone on whom a king casts the eye of favour, and as yet I—I am rather swept off my feet. I am tired into the bargain. You will remember"—her tone took on a shade of pathos—"I have exerted myself all the evening for your Majesty's pleasure, and it is late. I appeal to the proverbial Galician courtesy! Leave me now, and if in the morning you are still graciously inclined towards me—why, what woman could deny a King!"

She smiled at him, a smile that was full of mystery. In a moment it became clear that, for a time, she had prevailed. His vanity betrayed him.

"Fairest lady, you have spoken well. I bow to your decree. To-morrow I will return to bask in your smiles. Meanwhile if there is anything you require——"

"Thank you, I have everything." She indicated her dressing-case. "I wish your Majesty good-night."

He kissed her hand. "By the way," he added, "in case you should attempt to overpower the maid, escape is impossible by that means. The door through which she enters opens into a corridor whence you can gain no exit. But I am sure you would not consider such a foolish step. Again, good-night."

He entered the dummy wardrobe, and half-closed the door.

"You will notice a small bolt on your side," he remarked as he departed. "It is a manifestation of that Galician courtesy to which you referred."

The door clicked, and Hilda was alone.

The decorous maid glided in, closing the door carefully. She laid out the captive's nightgown and toilet necessaries, and, being told that she could go, departed.

There was a small bolt also on the door by which she disappeared, so perfect is Galician courtesy. Hilda shot them both, and furthermore wedged one door with an ivory-handled button-hook, and the other with a pair of scissors. Then, exhausted by the trials and troubles of the evening, she tumbled into bed, and slept all night without waking once.

V.

"Wine, woman, and song!" exclaimed the King, leaning over one end of a settee in the boudoir, at the other end of which sat Hilda. "That is my motto—a motto fit for a king. Some say, 'Wine, woman, and war,' but war seems to me a dangerous and useless occupation."

"My father was killed on the Italian frontier," remarked the captive.

"Just so—he was killed," replied the King. "Did I not tell you war is dangerous? It is dangerous to love also; you, for example, have, I can see, the spirit of a tigress. A lesser man would be terrified of you. I"—he drew himself up—"I am not afraid. Behold, I come. I will take you in my arms."

"No," she objected, "not yet. You forget, my King, that anticipation is sweet. Let us dally with love for the moment. Do not rub the bloom off the grape with hasty fingers. Tell me something of yourself."

"There is little to tell, *carissima*. I sit in my private apartments, which communicate with yours through the wardrobe, and sigh for my beloved Hilda. There is no occupation for a man consumed with love, but to dream of his adored. In Galicia I review the army, I open parliament, I do all manner of tiresome things. Here I am incognito; I can love like any ordinary man."

"So his private apartments are next to mine!" she thought. "That ought to be

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useful if only I could think of some plan of escape."

"I have in my room a private telephone," went on the King, in the manner of a child enumerating its toys. "There is a little exchange in the Embassy, but my private telephone is separate from that. It goes direct to the Exchange outside. You will not find my number in the directory; I can speak, but I may not be spoken to. I have found that telephone useful in my affairs of the heart. Now, of course, it is superseded."

He edged nearer and ogled Hilda superlatively. She sat masking her thoughts with a meaningless smile. Inspiration had come suddenly; the telephone had given her a clue.

Rudolf would be home on Friday. If only she could keep off this atrocious monarch till then, and get to the telephone——

"My King," she began caressingly, "a thought has occurred to me. Perhaps you will be angry with me if I tell you, but I will chance that. On Friday is my birthday. Let our first kiss be given on that day. Leave me till then, and let us, set apart from one another, yearn for Friday to arrive. You shall dine with me here that night, if you will be so gracious."

A smile wreathed his sallow features.

"Well thought, dear lady of my heart! To-morrow and on Thursday I must be far away. Some pestilent nobleman has invited me to stay with him, and I cannot avoid him. I do not return till late on Friday, but at nine o'clock I will sup with you, and you shall come to my longing arms."

Glancing at his watch he rose to take leave.

"I thank you, my King," murmured Hilda, her heart thumping with excitement. She gave him her hand to kiss, and he bent over it ravenously. "For these two days you will be ever in my thoughts, and on Friday—why on Friday we shall know one another better."

VI.

To-day was Tuesday, and during Wednesday and Thursday he would be far away because some pestilent nobleman had invited him. Hilda sat down to plot and scheme his undoing.

For two days and all through Friday she matured her plans. The silent, watchful, irreproachable maid waited on her; she had but to ask and her requests were granted immediately. Even the bedroom window-sash was unscrewed at her desire, and every now and then she leant out between the bars and breathed the air of freedom. Nothing save liberty was denied her.

On Friday evening Hilda put on her dinner-gown and ordered a light dinner for seven o'clock. The King was to sup with her at nine, but she did not intend that either of them should partake of the meal. After dinner she stretched herself on a settee in her boudoir and ran over the details of her plan again and again. More especially she prayed that Rudolf Merion might remain at home that night. If not . . . Well, she would face the alternative when the necessity arose, and not before.

By half-past eight they had set out supper for two in the boudoir. At a quarter-to-nine Hilda placed a heavy brass fire-dog from the grate on an occasional-table ready to her hand, and concealed it with a carelessly-draped scarf. At nine o'clock precisely the wardrobe-entrance clicked open and the King entered. She saw him through the doorway leading from her bedroom, place the key—a little Yale key—in his waistcoat-pocket, and hasten towards her.

"My beloved!" he cried, and bent over her hand. "The night is ours!" he went on. "No one can disturb us. The door leading to my room, which gives on to your bedroom, is locked, and the only key rests on my writing-table in that room itself."

Hilda smiled into his eyes.

"My King is a wise King!" she murmured, and rose slowly to her feet. "Let us eat and drink!" she continued. She took a step towards the ordered feast—a step that brought her within easy reach of the occasional-table and its draped burden. Then her eyes glanced downward at her little silk-clad right foot. The strap of its satin slipper hung unfastened.

His Majesty followed the glance, took in the situation, snatched the opportunity.

"See!" he exclaimed, "the King does homage to his adored," and, falling on one knee, bent to his task. With one lightning sweep of her arm Hilda snatched the heavy brass dog, muffled in the scarf, and brought it down a crushing blow on the back of his head.

Raymundo X. never made a sound. He seemed to crumple, and slipped sideways into an inert heap on the floor.

For a moment the room swam before Hilda. Then she recovered, thrust a table-napkin into the royal mouth, and gagged the insensible monarch effectually, winding the scarf round and round his head to keep the napkin in place. His feet and hands she

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bound securely with cord from the blinds. He breathed stertorously, and his condition caused her no anxiety.

Her one pre-occupation was to insure his entire helplessness, and, as a final precaution, she tore a muslin curtain into strips, and literally swathed him in bonds from shoulders to ankles. Then she gave a last look at his gag, took the key from his waistcoat-pocket, passed into his private apartment through the wardrobe-entrance, and made straight for the telephone.

Was Rudolf at home? Was he? *Was he?*

For an eternity she waited while the Exchange connected her with his number. She had done her part—the King was helpless, the silent maid dismissed for the night, the outer door of the King's room locked. Surely luck must hold now. Surely at this point Fate could not be so cruel——

"Hullo!" said Rudolf's voice in her ear, and Hilda could have cried for joy.

"I'm Hilda," she called softly.

"Thought you were in Cornwall. How did the command-performance go?"

"So well that I'm still at the Embassy—a prisoner. The King is good enough to admire me——"

"*What?*" interrupted Rudolf's voice, half astonishment, half cold fury.

"Listen!"

Briefly she outlined the position. Not once did he interrupt, except to murmur "Bravo!" when she told of Raymundo's downfall.

"And now," she ended, "you must get me out, Rudolf, or I stay here. I'm done; I daren't attempt to escape through the Embassy, and the windows are all barred. I don't know what you can do, but, whatever it is, do it quickly because I can't stand much more. A girl wasn't meant to pole-axe men; things are getting on my nerves."

A low, confident laugh reached her.

"I'll have you out in an hour," said Rudolf, cheerfully contemptuous of difficulties. "A hacksaw from my tool-kit will make short work of those bars—you'll get through 'em in five minutes. There's no use going to the police; they'd think I was mad, and then take hours to move, because of international complications. I'll do the thing on my own. Make a line while you're waiting, to haul up a length of Alpine-rope I'll go and lift from a pal, and a revolver as well just to make you feel quite comfy, and the hacksaw. I'll be under your window by"—he broke off apparently to look at his watch. "It's 9.30 now. Say ten or a quarter-past. Good-bye."

She put down the receiver, and for a few minutes sobbed helplessly because of the reaction. Then she ransacked the King's writing-table for string, found a ball, tied a paper-weight to the end of it, and sat down where she could keep an eye on her captive, to wait for Rudolf.

VII.

Merion left the telephone and let out a flood of bitter, calculated blasphemy, disposing of the King's soul in workmanlike fashion, and clothing his thoughts in words picked up from several different armies.

Then he sorted out a hacksaw, an automatic pistol for himself, and a serviceable, steady-going revolver for Hilda. He loaded his own pistol and shoved a spare magazine into his pocket; into Hilda's revolver he slid five cartridges, letting the hammer rest over the empty sixth chamber. She understood firearms, but he played for safety.

He looted a useful length of Alpine-rope from the man in the opposite flat, jumped into a taxi, and drove to the end of the street in which the Embassy stood.

"Here's a sovereign," he said to the driver. "Wait about this street for an hour, and if I don't come back, why, run and play. If I do, I shall have a lady with me and we may be in a hurry. It'll mean another ten shillings for you, though."

"Very good, sir."

Merion strolled away, privily transferring his pistol to the pocket of the rain-coat under which he concealed the rope, and turned in at the gate of the Embassy in due course A window or two in the upper regions glowed faintly, but most of the place was in darkness. He made no attempt at concealment, arguing that no one questions the confident person who looks as if he has a right to be present, and made his way round to the back of the house.

Just as he surveyed the solitary lighted window on the third floor from the deep shadow cast by the blank walls of the jutting wings, Hilda looked out for the fifth time.

"Hullo!" he called softly.

He saw her start back in alarm.

"I'm Rudolf!" he added reassuringly. "Heave out that line, will you?"

"Thank Heaven!" he heard her exclaim, and then the paper-weight came dangling down to be received in his ready hands.

He cut it off, and attached to the string the hacksaw, the coil of light rope, and the revolver in its holster. Then he paused and looked up.

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With one lightning sweep of her arm Hilda snatched the heavy brass dog, muffled in the scarf, and brought it down a crushing blow on the back of his head. (Page 207, col. 2.)

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"There's a loop at one end of the rope," he explained "Slip it over the leg of a bedstead; wheel the bedstead to the window if it's a light one, and then it'll hold you all right. Use the hacksaw like an ordinary saw; you'd better close the window, because the blade may squeak a bit. The revolver's loaded, in case anyone interrupts you. Don't hesitate to use it."

"What'll you do in the meanwhile?" she queried anxiously.

"I? Oh, I'm going to have a quiet pipe," returned Rudolf cheerfully; his fingers were already busy filling a faithful briar.

"And if the noise brings anyone?"

He laughed.

"There'll probably be more noise then, and afterwards they'll go away."

She glanced down at the tall, capable-looking figure leaning against the house, watched the comforting glow of his pipe, and then pushed down the window gently, and started on the bars.

They were made of iron, not steel, and the hacksaw cut through them with ease. In ten minutes the rope had been looped to the bedstead, and all was ready for the escape. Hilda had previously changed into travelling-kit. She gave a last glance at the King: he was conscious, but without power to interfere.

"Look out for my dressing-case, Rudolf!" she called in a cautious tone, and lowered it skilfully. Then, after a last glance round, she put the revolver in her pocket, scrambled out on to the window-sill, and slid neatly down to her waiting rescuer.

"Well done!" he exclaimed admiringly, wringing both her hands.

She smiled up at him with a world of gratitude in her eyes. To Merion, the faithful lover, that alone was sufficient reward, although he ached to take her in his arms and comfort her. Then her expression changed to that of a hunted thing.

"Let's go quickly," she begged. "This place terrifies me."

He took her dressing-case in his left hand, and guided her round into the drive. Halfway to the entrance-gate, the sound of a window in the front of the house being flung up caused them to turn. A powerful street-lamp lit up the figure at the window. Hilda recognised the Galician maid, over whose face seemed to flicker a smile of derision.

The maid attempted to raise no alarm. Slowly, with a touch of mockery, she closed the window.

"Come on!" urged Merion.

In the street he paused to look up and down; the lights of his taxi glowed in the distance, and the driver came at the beckoning of a hand.

They stepped into the cab, and it slid away rapidly. Again Merion took both the girl's hands, and his strong, protecting grasp told her all he might not say in words.

She looked at him thoughtfully, affectionately, almost maternally.

"Dear Rudolf!" she murmured. "How good you are to me, and how little I deserve it."

They leant back in their seats, and a clock caught Hilda's eye as they swept past.

"Eleven o'clock!" she exclaimed, catching a sudden inspiration. "Tell him to drive straight to Paddington, Rudolf! I've just time to have supper with you, and then catch the midnight train to Cornwall!"

(Another Story of Lady Hilda next month.)

DAYBREAK.

The dawn is breaking; see yon far-away
Grey clouds of night are gilt with virgin ray;
Phœbus bursts forth, flings wide his golden gate—
It is the day.

No welcome glad have I for thee, nor gay
Accursed dawn; did not my dentist say
"Next Friday"? and I go to meet my fate—
It is the day!

Gwen Nisbet.

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My Cigarette

My cigarette – I love you so!
Holding you thus with languid lip
I woo delicious dreams that flow
Divinely from your gilded tip.

And while your incense drugs the air
My thoughts, enchanted, steal away
To frolic in the sunlit glare
Of ancient Egypt for a day.

Dear Cairo! Wide from pole to pole
Your name brings joy, and no regrets!
Do not your gifted natives roll
The nicest of my cigarettes?

F.

Beatrice Sullivan

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MAKING the BEST of LIFE

By Mr. Optimist.

The Editor has asked me to interest the readers of this Magazine in the subject of "Making the Best of Life." I don't suppose that he could possibly have provided me with a more popular topic. After all, we have only one life to live, and both you and I are equally impressed with the importance of making the very best of it, so there will be no difficulty in getting your interest. But the Editor wants me to go further than this. He wants me not only to interest but also to help you, and month by month, in the space which he places at my disposal, this is exactly what I will try to do.

LET ME HELP YOU.

I WONDER how many men and women there are in this country to day who are really making the best of their lives? It would be difficult to find out. Life is made up of so many big and little things. We have our work and our play, our meals and our sleep, our health and our love affairs, and a host of other items which all have more or less bearing upon the thing which we call our Life.

Once a month we will discuss these matters together, and if, as a result, every reader of THE ROYAL can make his or her life just a little brighter, a little more interesting, a little more full of the things which really count, then my object will have been accomplished.

You spent lots of time planning your summer holidays, but surely your career is a far more important matter.

LADIES INVITED.

When the Editor first talked over this matter with me, it was suggested that I should devote myself entirely to the interests of our men readers. But this seemed hardly fair. There is no getting away from the fact that girls are, nowadays, just as keen on making the best of their lives as the members of the sterner sex.

The time when a woman was content to stake everything upon a lucky draw in the lottery of Marriage has gone by. The modern girl is just as keen as her brother to strike out in life for herself, and make the very most of it. She is able and eager to think and work and plan for herself. If a happy marriage comes her way—well and good; but in the meantime she takes no chances.

PLANNING YOUR CAREER.

You have spent lots of time planning your summer holidays. You have carefully weighed the relative attractions of the seaside, the rivers, and the mountains, and you have devoted heaps of care and thought to making your arrangements. But your career—the future happiness and well-being of yourself and all who are dependent upon you—is surely a far more important matter.

You have abilities which you ought to be using to the very best advantage. These are matters on which I can, perhaps, advise and assist you if you will give me the chance.

It is men who are lacking in moral fibre who are out of the running when there is a really good post going.

ROOM HIGHER UP.

You have often heard the phrase "Plenty

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The sign-board at the entrance to the pathway of success bears the single word "Work."

of room at the top." But have you ever seriously considered what it means? Let me give a simple illustration. The other day I was talking to a man who has about a thousand men in his employ. He had two vacancies to fill.

One was worth £2 10s. per week and the other £6 10s. Both vacancies were advertised. For the £2 10s. a week job there were shoals of applications and there was no difficulty at all in finding the right man. But for the higher paid position very few applications were received, and not a single applicant had the necessary qualifications.

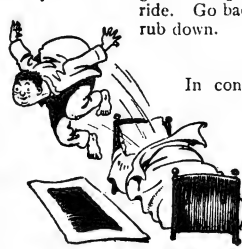
WOULD YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN?

Just think of it! For the two posts there was a total of 275 applications. Yet not one of these 275 men had thought it worth while to take the trouble to equip himself with the knowledge and training necessary to earn £6 10s. a week. Some few of them, I have no doubt, were lacking in moral fibre and were, therefore, out of the running. But I am prepared to wager that at least 150 could have fitted themselves thoroughly and satisfactorily for the better position if they had seriously attempted to do so.

THE CHIEF BUSINESS OF LIFE.

Your career must be properly planned, and having made your plans, you can't afford to sit down and rest. There is no easy way to success. But there is a *certain* way, and the sign-board at the entrance bears the single word "Work."

The man who always brings to bear upon his task the full powers of mind and soul, and who, collecting all his faculties, centres them upon the thing to be done and lets nothing turn him aside, that man will chisel his name upon the records of living achievement.



Why waste the bright summer mornings? Jump out of bed at six o'clock, and get some exercise!

KEEPING FIT.

You can't work properly if your health is poor. When you hear a man or woman say: "I feel very fit this morning," you know that they are in the humour to "*Do* Things." Their heads are clear, their eyes are bright, their nerves are at rest, their frames are tingling with good health and vigour. For most practical purposes you can divide human beings into two classes—the fit and the unfit. In which are you?

DAYLIGHT SAVING.

There is a very simple way in which nine people out of ten can get more out of life than they do now. You have heard of the Daylight Saving Bill and its repeated failures to get through Parliament. But why not do your own daylight saving? There is no reason why you should lie in bed between 6 and 7.30 a.m. these lovely summer mornings when the sun is shining gloriously and the air is at its freshest and sweetest.

The man who centres all his faculties on his work will chisel his name upon the records of living achievement.

Just try it for yourself one of these bright mornings and you will never again be content to miss the hours of happiness and healthy exercise which the sun has stored up for you. Jump out of bed at 6 o'clock. Dress simply and warmly. Put on a wool jersey if you have one, and either work in the garden or go out for a brisk walk or cycle ride. Go back in good time for a tub and a rub down.

AN INVITATION.

In conclusion, I want to invite every reader of THE ROYAL who wishes to make the most of his or her life to write to me. If you want advice concerning your career, or in connection with your sports, your recreations, your hobbies, please do not hesitate to write to "Mr. Optimist," care of THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

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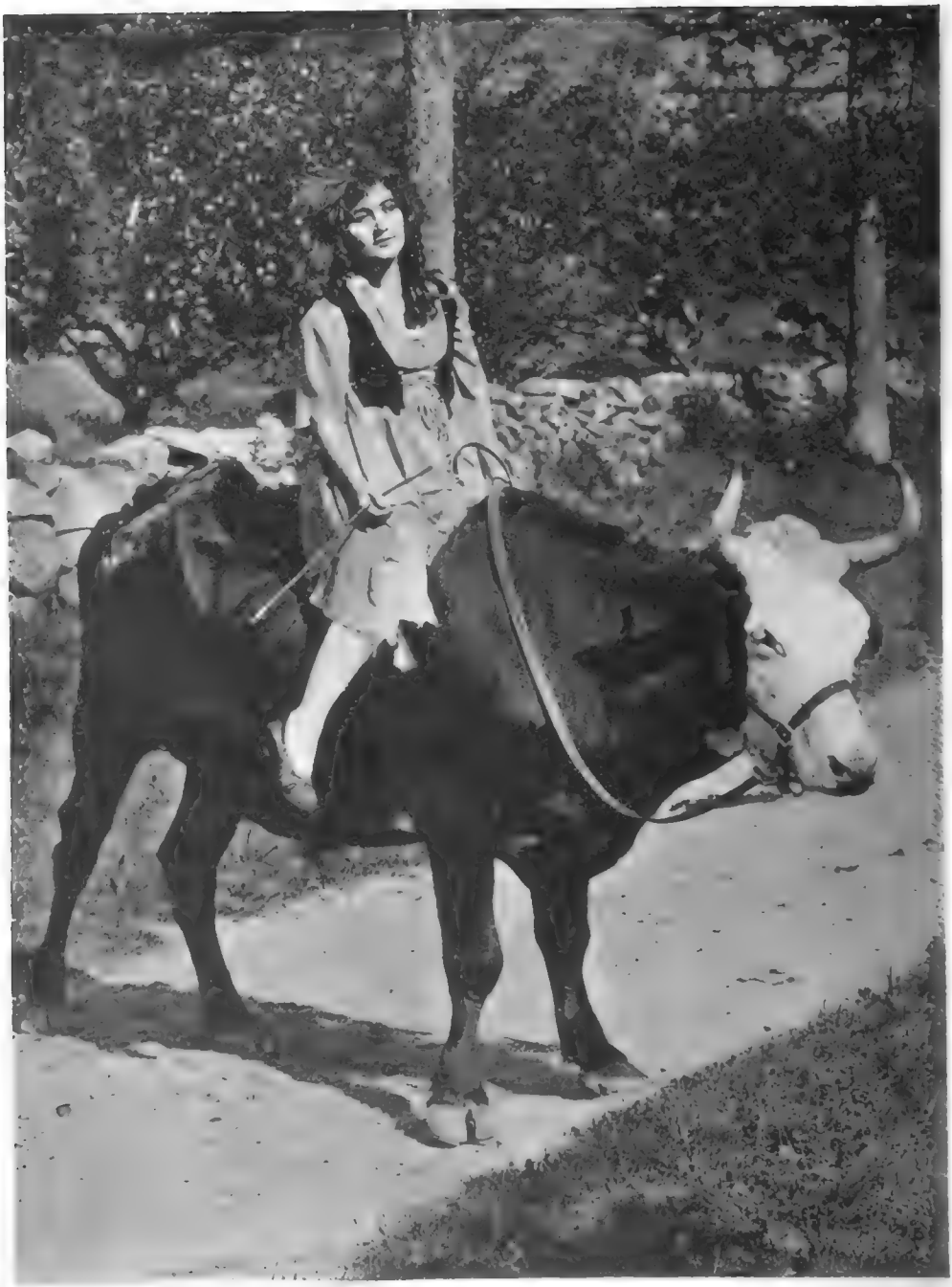

One seldom sees a fair lady on such a strange steed, but Miss Fuller rode this beast in "Elise, the Forester's Daughter," in which she took the name part.

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Photo Apeda Studio, New York.

Miss Mary Fuller.

HANDSHAKES *With* DEATH

ESCAPING FROM A BURNING SKY-SCRAPER.

Written by Margaret Chute, from the narrative of Miss Mary Fuller, the American Biograph star, famous as the heroine of "What Happened to Mary."

WHEN I was engaged to play the heroine in the series of film-plays called "What Happened to Mary," I was simply delighted.

"Of course, it won't be all plain sailing," I was told, and answered: "I don't mind a bit. Make it as rough as you like; I'll stick to it!"

But, although I anticipated a few thrills in the course of my wanderings as Mary, I got a good many more than I bargained for.

Each story contained a certain amount of incident, which proved decidedly ticklish when the moment for filming arrived.

For instance, once I had to rush along a crowded thoroughfare, pursued by several men, jump into a huge motor-car, and steal it! This I did by driving at a furious pace through the traffic, and out into the country, followed by the men, in another car. I could drive a car, of course, but when the scene was filmed I was so excited that I nearly got smashed up between two lumbering vans.

On another occasion I raced in a 40-h.p. motor-boat—*alone!* It was a thrilling adventure, and I sent that boat along at a staggering pace. When it was over and I climbed out safe and sound, I realised the dangers I had avoided by a hair's-breadth, and nearly collapsed.

Afterwards I made another voyage in a sailing-boat, and had a horrid time, for a regular gale sprang up, and a second boat came to my rescue—only just in time.

During the filming of this series I crossed to England, and scenes were taken on the liner and also in the heart of London. These experiences, though delightful, were not exactly thrilling; but when "Mary" got back to the States, I found myself face to face with two fierce thrills in one drama. And the second episode nearly proved my last effort at cinema—or any other—work.

This is the story, as far as I can remember.

At the beginning of this particular play I got shut up in a building which caught fire, and had to escape as best I could. Instead of being filmed in a studio, this picture had to be taken on a real building—and a high one into the bargain—in order that I might make a journey down the fire-exit and be rescued by a genuine fireman.

We rehearsed the scene as well as possible in advance, but a great deal had to be left until the actual taking of the picture. I knew exactly what I had to do and where I had to go—and that was all!

Having arrived at the building and secured a real fire-escape, engine, and crew, we got to work. I was escorted to the room where the scene was played, and a camera duly recorded events, as arranged. Then the operator departed to a window, several floors lower, to record my escape, while another man was waiting on the pavement to do his share of filming.

I was left alone; the "fire" was started by means of burning sulphur, and, shrouded in dense clouds of smoke, I clambered on to the fire-exit. Rushing down the narrow iron stairs, not daring to look from that

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dizzy height at the street and its occupants, I reached the place where the fire-escape should have joined the stairway—*and found it was about eight feet short!*

On the ladder stood a fireman; above his head I hovered.

"Go on!" yelled the producer from a window. "You *must* reach the escape!"

Choked and blinded by the sulphur fumes, I clung to the stair-rail, and tried to review the situation. After much trouble, the engine and firemen had been secured and the house borrowed; the moment would never come again; it would be silly to fail. It was "up to me," so I took a deep breath and prepared to join the fireman!

Lowering myself, I hung from the iron flooring by both hands.

"Great!" screamed a voice from nowhere. "Realism—great snakes!—realism! Go on Mary! Shut your eyes and then drop—he'll catch you!"

Terrified, I opened my eyes, and caught a bird's-eye glimpse of the crowd far below, which was soon blotted out by clouds of smoke. Beneath me I saw the fireman with one hand on his ladder, and the other extended, waiting for me. It was now—or never! I unclasped my fingers—and dropped!

A second later I was clinging to that fireman, half crying, half laughing; and the next thing I remembered is somebody dashing cold water in my face. For I fainted, for the first time in my life, as I was being carried down the fire escape.

But my troubles were not over by any means. Having eluded death by fire, Mary—in the story—was locked in a room at the top of a skyscraper, and escaped by climbing to a lower floor on a rope made of sheets and blankets, knotted together. I acted the scene in a room at the top of an eighteen-storey building, portraying Mary's terror and determination to escape.

Seizing the bedclothes, I tied sheets and blankets into a long rope, while the camera whizzed fiercely. Then, just as I was going to fling the "rope" out of the window and climb after it, the camera was stopped, while the producer and operator made sure that the knots were safe, and that the rope would bear my weight.

Then they went away to watch the scene from below, and I was left alone to climb on to the window ledge, eighteen storeys above the street level, and lower myself hand over hand to the tenth floor. There was a camera in a window across the road and another below me, so I knew I had to get through the scene somehow.

Now that it is all over—and safely over—I must confess that my hands trembled violently as I fixed the rope inside the room, climbed the ledge, and shut the window behind me to help keep the rope steady. And as I stood there, waiting to start the descent, I felt sick with terror.

For a minute I nearly turned back; then a distant voice called: "Ready?"—and I heard myself answer "Yes."

Giving a final tug at the rope, I swung my legs over, gripped it between my ankles, and began to climb down. The wretched thing swayed and jerked itself against the building as I crept downwards, very, very gingerly.

I realised soon that my hands were cut and aching, and that I must rest them alternately before I could hope to finish the descent. So I cried: "Wait!"—and the faint clicking of the cameras ceased. Then I clung tightly to my life-line with both feet and one hand, giving each a brief respite in turn. My eyes were fixed on the rope above my head, and as I stared I saw a knot, slipping—slipping—slipping . . .

For a minute I didn't realise what was happening, and I watched it, in a dream. Then knowledge came in a ghastly flash, and I knew that one of the knots had been insecurely fastened, and that if I didn't do something at once it would come undone and I should fall over one hundred feet to the pavement below.

Should I go up—or down? The knot was about three feet above me—the rope stretched below me to an unknown depth. I could never hope to get *down*—but I might get *up* with luck . . .

So up I went, holding my lower lip between my teeth, and conscious of voices shouting hoarse directions—for the producer thought I had gone mad suddenly. Every inch I climbed I could see the knot slipping—and slipping.

At last I was near it—had reached it—had passed it, leaving a trail of blood behind me from my torn hands! Perched on the window ledge, I made the knot secure; then started the descent once more.

When I reached my destination, the producer dragged me through the window, more dead than alive.

"Why did you go back?" he asked.

As I told him, his face grew deathly white.

"Great heavens!" he cried, "that's the narrowest escape I've ever known."

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Beneath me I saw the fireman with one hand on his ladder, and the other extended . . . I unclasped my fingers—and dropped!

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ANOTHER DELIGHTFUL PINCH COMEDY. BE SURE YOU DON'T MISS IT.

THE BADNESS OF LADY BLESSINGTON.

By Pearson Choate.

The genius of Pinch does not stop short at providing sensations for those clients who desire thrilling experiences. In this story he arranges a special performance for a lady of high degree who wishes to be a spectator of his amazing methods. The comedy that results leaves nothing to be desired either in the way of excitement or amusement.

By virtue of her birth, her beauty, the great possessions of her husband, and her own brilliant charm, Lady Blessington was a social power. Consequently, when Mr. Silas Q. Pinch, the Sensationalist, found amongst his letters one morning an imperative message asking him to wait upon her at Blessington House, he recognised that the invitation was one which could not be ignored. He called.

"Silas Q. has reached the height of his professional reputation," he remarked impressively as Lady Blessington received him in her boudoir. "Lady Blessington has sent for him. He can go no further."

Lady Blessington laughed gaily. Laughter suited her. It emphasised her peculiar grace. She was small and exquisite, her features were delicate, her complexion fresh and brilliant. On first sight she had all the charm of a Dresden figure. A second glance revealed the fact that dark hair, vivid eyes, and an elusive restlessness of expression gave her that added lure which is of the South.

"I have been told many strange things about Mr. Pinch, the Sensationalist," she said, "but no one told me the strangest thing of all—that he is a flatterer who makes pretty speeches."

"One of my numerous titles is Master of the Art of the Unexpected," chuckled Pinch.

They sat down. There was silence while Pinch settled himself leisurely in his chair and produced and lit his customary cheroot. A smile of amusement flickered across Lady Blessington's sensitive lips as she watched his movements. One found something humorous, she thought, in the mere appearance of the odd Pinch. The little man was wearing morning dress, and, in spite of the faultless lines of his well-cut coat, his corpulence was aggressive. His round and shining countenance was eloquent of good living.

It was hard to believe, Lady Blessington felt, that this slightly bald and double-chinned gourmet could have been responsible for the exploits with which he was credited. Surely he was too good-humoured and too fat for such whimsical enterprises. And yet there was a latent hint of mischief in the roguish twinkle which lurked in his merry blue eyes, behind the big gold-rimmed spectacles, which, perhaps, after all, made the stories told of him credible.

"Lady Blessington sent for the Sensationalist," Pinch remarked at last abruptly. "Behold—he is here."

"I want you to do me a favour, Mr. Pinch," Lady Blessington began doubtfully.

"It shall be done," Pinch announced with a gracious gesture of his plump right hand. "What is it?"

Thus encouraged, Lady Blessington made her request.

"I want to see the Sensationalist at work," she said. "I have heard so much about you,

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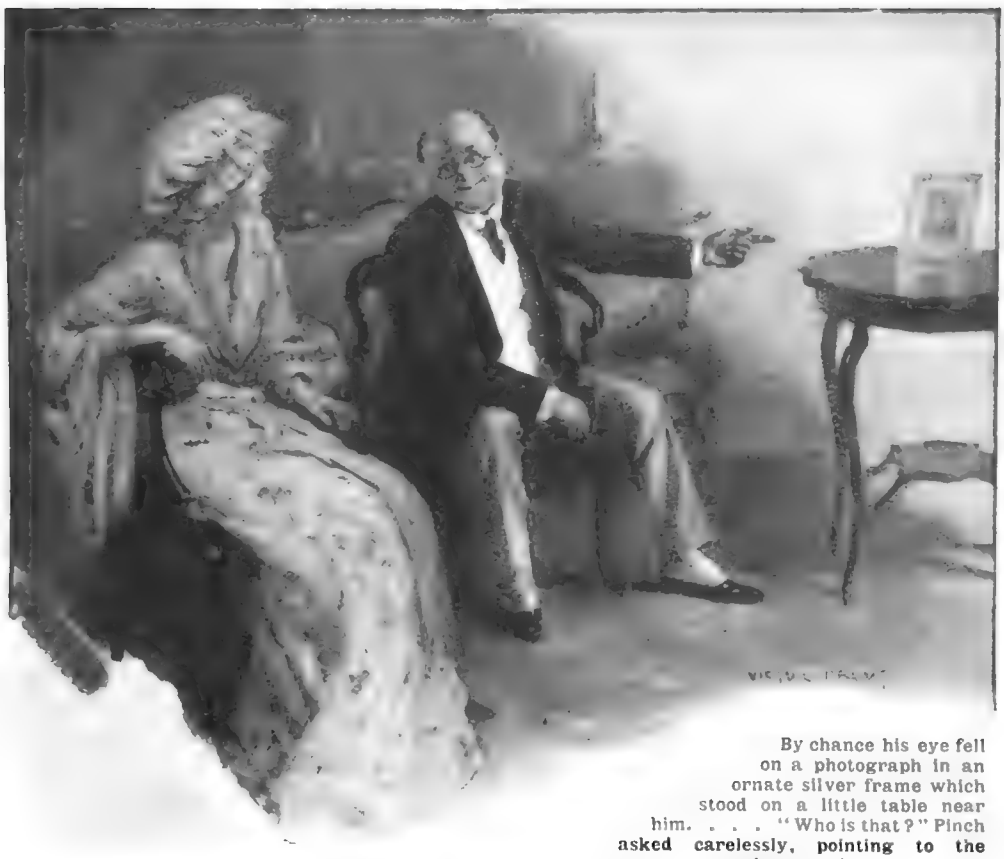

By chance his eye fell on a photograph in an ornate silver frame which stood on a little table near him. . . . "Who is that?" Pinch asked carelessly, pointing to the photograph.

Mr. Pinch—such extraordinary stories of the novel sensations, unusual experiences, and amusing adventures you arrange for your clients. I want to see how it is done and to see you doing it yourself—from the outside. I should regard that as a great favour. I think that it would be even more amusing to be a spectator of one of the Sensationalist's exploits than to be the principal person involved. Is that possible? Do say yes. It would be a delightful expérience."

Pinch blew two or three rings of smoke from his cheroot before he replied.

"With the one and only Silas Q. all things are possible," he said slowly. "The request is reasonable, and, in its way, a compliment. Better still, it is original. Few of my clients are original. But you will have to pay me double fees."

He paused for a moment.

"There is one difficulty," he went on thoughtfully. "If you are to see the Sensationalist at work merely as a spectator, we shall require a third party as the objective of our operations. I could not betray the confidence of a trusting client by allowing you to watch a case in the regular routine of my business. A victim for our operations, unsuspecting and innocent—that is what we want."

Pinch broke off there and glanced idly round the room. By chance his eye fell on a photograph in an ornate silver frame which stood on a little table near him. The photograph was an expensive one of a handsome man in the prime of life, who wore a heavy moustache and a monocle, and had that air of easy distinction which is the best inheritance of the true aristocrat.

"Who is that?" Pinch asked carelessly, pointing to the photograph.

Lady Blessington was slightly puzzled by the apparent irrelevance of the unexpected question.

"Oh, that is Blessington, she said, "my husband."

A flash of triumphant mischief lit up the

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round and shining countenance of the Great Pinch.

"It is an inspiration. It shall be done," he cried delightedly. "He shall be our objective—the victim."

"But my husband—" Lady Blessington began.

"I will listen to no buts," Pinch broke in unceremoniously. "The scheme is already complete."

He rose to his feet and crossed the room.

"You will hear from me in a day or two," he added, turning at the door. "You shall see the Sensationalist at work, I promise you. For the present, adieu. Silas Q. salutes you."

He passed swiftly out of the room.

"A queer little man, this Pinch," Lady Blessington murmured. "I like him so much. But what will Blessington say, I wonder?"

She smiled.

"I shall not tell him," she decided wisely.

It was three days later that Lady Blessington heard from the Great Pinch. An express message, addressed to her, was delivered at Blessington House in the early evening. The message was brief and incisive:

> Persuade Blessington to run you out in his favourite car on to the Bath Road to-night. Do not carry a chauffeur or any other passenger. You want a breath of country air, and Blessington to yourself. You must.
>
> SILAS Q. PINCH.

Lady Blessington was notoriously restless and impulsive in temperament. She realised that the astonishing Pinch had arranged some frolic, and that was enough for her. The little man gave her no details, but the very mystery of his methods merely served to pique her curiosity. She decided as soon as she had read his message to carry out his directions.

As far as she was concerned the proposal presented no difficulties. Lord Blessington idolised his charming wife, and she had in her time persuaded him to fall in with far more exacting caprices than an informal motor run in the cool of the evening. As it happened, Lady Blessington reflected, on this occasion little or no persuasion would be needed. She and her husband were due that night at a reception at an important, but particularly dull, house. Blessington would be delighted to seize an excuse for avoiding the reception, and he would enjoy the joke, whatever it was, afterwards, when he knew all about it.

Blessington was the most good-humoured man alive. He could enjoy a joke even when it was against himself, and he was—what was the word Pinch had used?—the victim.

Lord and Lady Blessington dined alone at home that evening. Lady Blessington waited until the meal was over, and the servants had left the room, and her husband had subsided into an abstracted silence which seemed to indicate that he was already feeling the blighting influence of the impending dull reception, before she broached the subject of the frolic she had at heart.

"I am afraid that I am not at all in the mood for Doldrum House to-night," she began pensively.

"Nor am I," Lord Blessington confessed mournfully, dropping his monocle.

"Suppose we throw them over?"

"That would be hardly the thing," Lord Blessington objected mildly.

"That is a good reason for doing it," said Lady Blessington.

There was a short pause.

"I know what we will do," Lady Blessington continued brightly, as if the happy idea had just occurred to her. "We will throw the Doldrums over and have a motor run instead, just us two on our lonesome. I want some country air—I feel stifled here in town. We can have a spin along the Bath Road. It will do you good, Blessington; you look moped. We will run out into the real country in search of adventures; it will be a picnic. We have not had an excursion together for months. When we feel tired we will put up for the night at some nice, sleepy old country hotel. It is no use saying no, Blessington. I have spoken."

Lord Blessington endeavoured to look the disapproval which he did not feel, failed completely, and then capitulated with a good-humoured smile.

"How soon will you be ready?" he asked simply. "I should like a spin. It will give us a chance of trying the new car."

An hour later Lord and Lady Blessington left Blessington House.

"It was the Bath Road you fancied, was it not?" Lord Blessington asked cheerfully as he swung the new car, a landaulette fitted with an engine of uncommon power, through the West-end traffic.

"Yes," said Lady Blessington.

The evening was fine. The glory of the sunset still lingered on the horizon; there was promise of a full moon, and the air was cool and fragrant.

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Lord Blessington swung round quickly. He found himself gazing at a neat and ugly-looking revolver. Pinch had drawn the weapon quietly from his pocket, and now pointed it directly at the good Samaritan who had come to his aid. [*Page 223, col. 3.*]

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"An ideal night for a run," said Lord Blessington.

They soon left the town behind. The outlying suburbs were passed, and before long they struck the Bath Road and ran out into the open country.

Leaning back in her seat in the car beside her husband, Lady Blessington gave herself up to the enjoyment of the evening and the rush through the fair, pastoral countryside. There was no need for conversation. Blessington would never suffer the distraction of talk while he was at the steering-wheel. For him, as for her with her restless spirit, to be moving was enough.

The car licked up mile after mile of the white road. Night fell. The moon came out and shone brilliantly, so that the lights fixed to the car which Blessington switched on were hardly needed. In the moonlight the country was almost as clear as by day. Still nothing happened. Mile followed mile.

Where was Pinch?

In spite of herself, Lady Blessington began to yawn. The country was, after all, really very dull. Doubts about the outcome of the excursion even beset her. It was too bad of Pinch——

"Hallo!" Lord Blessington exclaimed suddenly. "A breakdown!"

He applied his brake, and pulled up the landaulette.

A torpedo-bodied racing motor-car was drawn up at the side of the lonely road. Near this car stood its disconsolate owner, obviously much discomforted. The various implements of the repairing outfit were scattered haphazard on the road. Plainly the racing-car had broken down, and its owner was striving in vain to remedy the trouble.

Lord Blessington was an honorary vice-president of the Motorists' Association. He became quite eloquent when he talked of the moral obligation resting upon all motorists to preserve the amenities of the road, and he practised what he preached. He stepped out of the landaulette and crossed to the breakdown. A motorist in distress was his brother.

"Can I be of any assistance?" he asked courteously.

The owner of the racing-car turned round.

Lady Blessington suppressed, just in time, a cry of delighted recognition. The owner of the racing-car was the Great Pinch.

The little man was wearing a white dust coat. He looked very hot, very flustered, and very helpless.

"The engine seems to have gone all to pieces," he exclaimed gloomily. "I have been tinkering with it for over an hour. I can do nothing with it. I am afraid that it is past repairing on the roadside."

Lord Blessington, like most amateurs, prided himself on his skill as a mechanic. He did his own repairs.

"Allow me," he said suavely, bending down to examine the disabled engine. "I may be able to locate the trouble."

Pinch smiled roguishly at Lady Blessington behind her husband's bent back. For a moment his left eyelid lay dead on his cheek in a wicked and challenging wink. Then he slipped his hand into the pocket of his dust-coat.

"The engine seems all right," Lord Blessington began, raising his head.

At that moment Lady Blessington screamed.

Lord Blessington swung round quickly. He found himself gazing at a neat and ugly-looking revolver. Pinch had drawn the weapon quietly from his pocket, and now pointed it directly at the good Samaritan who had come to his aid.

"Put up your hands," said Pinch.

Lord Blessington hesitated.

"Put up your hands," Pinch repeated curtly.

Lord Blessington obeyed.

It made a strange and thrilling little wayside drama for Lady Blessington, the only spectator of the moonlit scene. Her scream when Pinch produced his revolver so suddenly was an involuntary tribute to his ability as an artist in the unexpected, but she quickly recovered her composure. Of course, this must be, she realised, the jest which the amazing Pinch had arranged for her benefit. She had asked to see the Sensationalist at work, and her wish was being gratified. The Sensationalist certainly justified his title. To hold up a motor-car on a country road at night like a highwayman—it was immense. She herself had been almost as startled as Blessington. Poor Blessington—he looked very uncomfortable. Lady Blessington felt a wild desire for laughter as these thoughts, a matter of only a few seconds, rushed through her mind. And yet she was thrilled.

"The engine, as you so justly observe, is in perfect working order. So is the revolver," Pinch was saying to Lord Blessington, who seemed to be paralysed by a stupor of astonishment not unmixed with fear. "I mention these facts to save argument. You are, you will recognise, at my mercy, and so

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will be prepared, I trust, to meet my wishes."

Pinch paused there, smiling blandly.

"I have been feeling rather lonely," he went on, raising his voice. "Man is a social animal. I want company. I venture to ask the charming lady who is your companion to join me in my car. I trust that she will oblige me."

"But this is monstrous—an outrage," Lord Blessington stammered. "My wife——"

"Will now cross the road and take the vacant seat in my car," Pinch remarked suavely.

Lord Blessington advanced two or three steps towards Pinch as if about to attack him, and then recoiled before the menace of the revolver.

"I hope that I shall not have to resort to extreme measures," Pinch murmured gently.

Lady Blessington realised that the success of the amazing operations which the audacious Pinch had arranged for her amusement hung in the balance. She understood instinctively that the little man's orders must be carried out or the jest would be spoilt. If she hesitated, Blessington might make trouble. Pinch depended upon her. The jest was too good to spoil. She left the landaulette, crossed the road, and scrambled into the seat in the little man's car as he had directed.

"Thank you," said Pinch. "And now," he added, speaking to Lord Blessington, "you will oblige me by starting the engine of my car."

Lord Blessington obliged. A revolver is a form of argument an unarmed man can hardly disregard. Moving round to the front of the racing-car he started the engine. The throbbing beat of the machine provided convincing evidence of the satisfactory condition of the car.

"Thank you," said Pinch. "And now I must trouble you to walk down the road some yards," he went on, moving forward as he spoke. "A little further—and a little further. Thank you. What a delightful night it is. Have you noticed the moon? So picturesque. Almost a harvest moon."

Lord Blessington, under the compelling influence of the revolver, retreated, as Pinch advanced, some distance down the road, well away from both the cars.

"That will do," said Pinch ultimately. "Stay where you are. You move at your peril."

Then the little man began to retrace his steps backwards, keeping Lord Blessington, who stood still as he was ordered, covered by the revolver. He drew near the cars.

Lady Blessington watched the strange scene from her place in Pinch's car, thrilled and fascinated. The whole affair was amusing, grotesquely humorous, unbelievable.

Suddenly Pinch darted towards her. He jumped into the car beside her. His hand was on the driving-wheel. The car lurched forward. A minute later they were swinging along the road.

The Great Pinch had run off with Lady Blessington under her husband's very eyes!

Lady Blessington had one last glimpse of her husband. He was dashing up the road towards the landaulette.

"What is going to happen now, Mr. Pinch?" she gasped.

"There is going to be a little race," Pinch replied with a triumphant chuckle. "Blessington will chase us, but I do not think that he will catch us; we have a useful start and the speedier car. I am afraid that Blessington will be rather badly left."

"Poor Blessington!" his wife murmured demurely. "He will be annoyed."

Pinch glanced round at her with a provocative twinkle in his shining eyes.

"Did the Sensationalist come up to your expectations as a spectator?" he asked.

"It was wonderful, Mr. Pinch," Lady Blessington confessed. "I have hardly had time to realise it all yet."

"I am the one and only Silas Q.," Pinch crowed. "This is going to be quite an amusing affair. Mark the words 'going to be'; there is more to follow. We have only had the first act of the comedy so far. For the present—we motor."

And settling back in his seat he gave himself up exclusively for a while to the driving of the car, which tore on at a wild speed through the night.

Pinch was entirely right about the race. Freed from the menace of the revolver, Lord Blessington changed from the passive into the active. He made, as Lady Blessington had seen, for the landaulette, and tumbled into the car. Then he drove off after the fugitives in reckless pursuit.

The time and scene of the extraordinary escapade had been chosen with unerring judgment. The road was deserted. Only on a lonely road, in the heart of the country, late at night, could Pinch have hoped to be untroubled by passers-by. And in this matter, as he presently admitted candidly to Lady Blessington, he had been greatly favoured by fortune. Soon after they had

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begun their wild drive they encountered a heavy touring-car which was travelling in the opposite direction to themselves, towards London.

"If that clumsy omnibus had appeared a little earlier it might have been awkward for us—distinctly awkward," said Pinch.

This was a side of the affair which had not occurred to Lady Blessington.

"What would you have done?" she asked curiously.

"Held them up, too," Pinch replied imperturbably. "I had another gun for the purpose. But it would have complicated things."

"Suppose Blessington had shown fight?" Lady Blessington asked a little later, after a few minutes of silent consideration of the risks Pinch had run to make his *coup*. "You could not have fired at him."

"Only one man risks a shot from a revolver when he himself is unarmed." Pinch replied sententiously.

"What man is that?"

"A madman," chuckled Pinch.

The car rushed on. Now and then Lady Blessington turned her head and looked back along the road. There was no sign of Blessington in pursuit. This was hardly surprising. The landaulette was hopelessly outpaced by the speedier racer. Moreover, the great Pinch was a driver of quite exceptional parts; he could have given Lord Blessington a start instead of taking it from him, and beaten him easily.

Mile after mile slipped by; a mood of deep abstraction swept over Lady Blessington. She lost all sense of time and distance.

The drama by the wayside had seemed to occupy hours rather than the few swift minutes in which it had actually been performed. Now this wild rush through the night which had followed, appeared interminable.

Suddenly Pinch applied his brakes to the car with a swift movement which shook Lady Blessington out of her reverie.

"The second act of the comedy is about due," he remarked blandly. "Our cue is ambush."

He swung the car, as he spoke, out of the main road into a narrow lane on the right. He drove a little distance along the lane, and then pulled up. There was a bend in the lane; no one travelling at any speed along the main road was likely to notice the car.

Some time passed. Pinch produced and lit one of his cheroots; Lady Blessington was once again alert and interested. What was going to happen? The audacious Pinch seemed capable of anything.

A low humming noise reached Lady Blessington's ears. The noise grew louder. Then the landaulette shot down the main road past the end of the lane.

Pinch laughed maliciously.

"Blessington seems to be in haste," he murmured. "We will now pursue our pursuer."

He turned the car, ran it back on to the main road, and followed at a slightly moderated speed, after the landaulette.

"What are you going to do now, Mr. Pinch?" Lady Blessington asked.

"Surprise Blessington," Pinch chuckled.

A little later they ran into a small country town, which lay engulfed in the desolate silence of night. In the centre of the deserted market-place a solitary police-constable stood in deep converse with a motorist.

"Blessington is asking the constable if he has seen us go by," Pinch remarked. "This is the second act. Before I ring up the curtain I have to remind you that you are merely a spectator. I hope you will observe the neutrality of that position. Whatever happens you must not move from your seat in the car. Have I your promise?"

"Yes," said Lady Blessington.

Pinch swung the car across the market-place in fine style, and pulled up right alongside the landaulette.

A moment later the little man was on his feet and had buttonholed the constable.

Lord Blessington moved, after one start of surprise, no less swiftly. He jumped down from his seat in the landaulette and crossed to his wife.

"Thank God you are safe," he said fervently, clutching her hands.

Pinch was speaking with great animation and many expressive gestures to the constable. A phrase and a word here and there in his harangue reached Lord and Lady Blessington.

"Most fortunate! A dangerous lunatic—I am Dr. James—escaped from my private asylum at Branxton this evening after dinner. He is in evening dress as you see—got away with a car. Always does. Thinks he is pursuing somebody—persistent delusion. We have been chasing him for hours—brought the nurse with me—he thinks she is his wife. Extraordinary! Take him quietly if possible—may make trouble."

Lady Blessington, beset by a sudden twinge of conscience, glanced nervously at

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her husband. A flush of anger stole over Lord Blessington's handsome and good-humoured face; there was a dangerous light in his eyes. Suddenly he made a rush at Pinch, as if to attack him. Pinch, in spite of his corpulence, sprang nimbly enough to one side, and, in a flash, had once again produced his revolver.

"Look out for yourself, constable!" he shouted. "It is a fit of frenzy!"

The constable proved to be a man of resource worthy of a higher task than the preservation of a peace which was seldom broken in a country town where crime was not. His hand slipped round behind him and he drew his baton. Before Lord Blessington could avoid the blow, the constable had brought his weapon down on the head of the supposed madman with an alarming crack. Lord Blessington fell as a tree falls to the ground.

A moment later the little man was on his feet and had buttonholed the constable. Lord Blessington . . . jumped down from his seat in the landaulette and crossed to his wife.

One of the wealthiest peers in England had been laid out by a country policeman unknown to fame!

A moment later Lady Blessington pushed past the constable and bent over her husband's prostrate body. She had forgotten that it was all a jest. She had forgotten her promise to Pinch to remain in the car. Fear had taken the place of laughter in her heart. Lord Blessington did not move. The blow had apparently stunned him. Would he never open his eyes?

Pinch crossed swiftly to Lady Blessington's side.

"Get back to the car at once," he whispered peremptorily in her ear. "Leave everything to me. I insist."

Lady Blessington looked up at the little man. He was startlingly grave. There was something in his expression which compelled compliance with his orders. She returned to the car.

Pinch turned at once to the constable.

"You acted with great presence of mind. I will see that the Chief Constable hears of your promptitude," he said quickly. "I have your number—P.C. Y 22. Help me to get my patient into the car now, while he is still dazed. The frenzy will probably have passed when he comes round. We shall have no more trouble with him. I must run him straight back to the asylum. I will leave the other car in your charge and send a man down for it to-morrow. Meanwhile——"

He slipped a couple of sovereigns into the constable's not unready hand.

Between them Pinch and the constable raised Lord Blessington, who was beginning to recover from the blow, and supported him across to the car, where they packed him in on the seat beside Lady Blessington. With

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a certain amount of crushing there was just enough room left in the car for Pinch to perch at the steering-wheel.

"Are you all right, sir?" the constable asked, when Pinch had taken his place at the wheel. "I have handcuffs——"

"They are not necessary," Pinch put in. "He will be quite normal in all probability when he comes round. By that time, too, we shall be back at the asylum. Good-night, officer. Many thanks."

And the little man drove off down the road.

"I am afraid that this is a case where two are company and three discomfort," Pinch remarked suavely, with reference to the overcrowding of the car, when they had got well away from the market-place. "Blessington, unfortunately, is rather a big man."

"How dare you jest about it, Mr. Pinch?" Lady Blessington broke out fiercely. "It is horrible. I shall never be able to forgive you or myself."

Lady Blessington was on the verge of tears. For her the comedy had taken a tragic turn. Blessington seemed to be seriously hurt. He was very still as he sat propped up against her, his head resting on her shoulder, and it was all her fault. If it had not been for her foolish thirst for wild amusement, which had led her to deceive even her husband, such a thing could never have happened. She hated Pinch.

"We are now proceeding to an hotel of sorts which lies only a few miles along the road," Pinch remarked imperturbably, ignoring Lady Blessington's outburst. "The hotel, which boasts the sign of the Green Dragon, is old-fashioned but not uncomfortable. Cromwell is said to have spent a night under its hospitable roof."

Lady Blessington was too angry to offer any reply to this provocative inconsequence.

The car settled down again to the road. Some miles were covered in silence. The night was far spent, and the dawn was at hand. The sky on the horizon began to lighten. A wakeful cock in a farmyard they passed gave his first warning of the impending day as they rushed by.

Suddenly Lord Blessington moved uneasily, half freeing himself from his wife's protecting arm, and opened his eyes.

"What has happened?" he asked dully. "My head feels queer."

Lady Blessington trembled. What could she say?

Pinch was not at a loss, however. He laid his hand on Lord Blessington's shoulder.

"It is all right, Blessington," he said. "You have had a knock on the head. You are quite safe now."

"A knock on the head," Lord Blessington murmured in a puzzled tone. "Very odd."

Then he closed his eyes again and subsided.

At last, in the grey light of the early dawn, Pinch pulled up the car outside the Green Dragon hotel.

The night porter received them with an unconcealed yawn.

"Rooms on the first floor? Car to the garage? Certainly, sir," said he.

By this time Lord Blessington had so far recovered his faculties as to be able, with some persuasion and help from Pinch, to step out of the car and enter the hotel. Pinch guided him, followed by Lady Blessington, up the hotel staircase to a sitting-room on the first floor, to which the night porter led the way. Here they laid Lord Blessington down on an ottoman which was placed conveniently in the centre of the room.

"My head," Lord Blessington muttered, "feels very queer."

"I will see what I can secure from the hotel people in the way of restoratives," Pinch remarked to Lady Blessington. "I will be back in a minute or two."

And he left the room.

Lady Blessington crossed to the window, drew up the blind, and opened the lattices in order to let in the fresh air which is always excluded from hotel sitting-rooms, whether they be in town or country. Then she returned to the ottoman.

A little cry of astonishment escaped her.

Lord Blessington was lying with wide open eyes smiling up into her face. His smile was the smile of mild reproof mingled with good-humoured indulgence which he reserved for his wife's more startling caprices.

"Have you enjoyed the comedy?" Lord Blessington drawled.

"What do you mean?" Lady Blessington stammered.

"What I say—have you enjoyed the comedy?"

Lady Blessington sank down in a chair.

"You knew that it was—a comedy?" she gasped.

"From the first. All the time," Lord Blessington confessed.

"How did you know?"

Lord Blessington laughed.

"Pinch, the Great Pinch. You sent for him. You asked him to let you see him at

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work. He agreed. Half-an-hour later he told me all about it at the club. He proposed a scheme. I consented to join him in the comedy. I thought it would amuse you, and it gave me a chance of getting even with you for trying to fix things up behind my back. I rather liked the idea, too, of acting as assistant to the one and only Silas Q., the Sensationalist."

"Then you were expecting the hold up by the roadside?" Lady Blessington broke in.

"Yes," drawled her husband, "Pinch and I had arranged it all!"

"You are two villains," Lady Blessington cried.

A weight of anxiety had been lifted from her heart.

"But what about the constable and your poor head?" she asked a moment later.

"I got rather a bad knock," Lord Blessington replied calmly, "but it did not stun me really—for long. Still I may as well admit now as later that the affair in the market-place with the constable was as much of a surprise to me as to you. I fancy Pinch must have arranged it as a score against me. That was why I lost my temper at first and went for him. Later, I understood his game and played up to him again——"

There sounded a beautiful chuckle from the door. Pinch had returned.

"It was very foolish of you, Blessington, but I forgive you," the little man said. "You got a nasty crack for your trouble. I had meant to get you away quietly. The constable was perhaps a trifle too ready with his baton. Still it added to the drama of the night——"

Pinch was carrying a tray loaded with seductive bottles, glasses, and sandwiches. He moved forward into the room.

"It has been a comedy in three acts," he declared. "The first act by the roadside was designed for your benefit," he went on, speaking to Lady Blessington, as she placed a table in position for the tray. "The second act in the market-place was more particularly directed, as he has justly surmised, to the edification of Blessington. The third act is now proceeding, but must soon close with the customary reconciliation between all the characters. Before that desirable conclusion can be reached, however, we shall all have to forgive ourselves and one another."

He paused there and looked at Lord and Lady Blessington with a comical and disarming smile.

"What do you say?" he continued. "I flatter myself that you have both enjoyed varied sensations. Lady Blessington, as she wished, has seen the Sensationalist at work, and in addition has experienced amusement, astonishment, and some anxiety and fear. Blessington has enjoyed amusement, surprise, sudden anger, and a knock on the head. I have justified my title as Sensationalist and will shortly present my little account. Shall we forgive each other and bring down the curtain on the comedy? Is it to be peace?"

Lady Blessington laughed merrily.

"It has been a wonderful night, Mr. Pinch," she cried. "Let it be peace."

"I have learnt wisdom," Lord Blessington drawled. "Let it be peace. A wise man, who wishes to avoid being knocked on the head, does not war with the Great Pinch."

Pinch filled the glasses.

"I drink to the Sensationalist," Lord Blessington announced.

"And I toast the Sensationalist and his very able assistant," Lady Blessington murmured.

"Behold—the comedy is ended!" chuckled Pinch.

TRIOLET.

To paddle away in a little canoe
On a beautiful summer's day,
As long as the boat contains but two,
To paddle away in a little canoe
Is surely a pleasant thing to do,
No matter what folks may say—
To paddle away in a little canoe
On a beautiful summer's day.

L. M.

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Ski-ing **is possible practically all the year round in Norway, and there are few sports so exhilarating. The strange formation of the snow-hills is admirably illustrated in this wintry-looking scene.**

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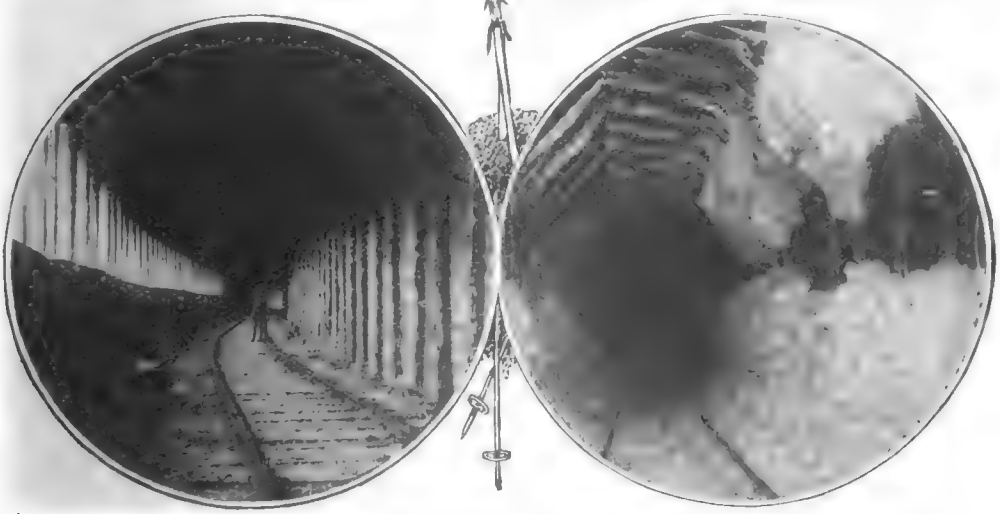
The Finest Scenic Railway in the World

The snow clearing on the Bergen Railway is done by means of rotary snow-ploughs, which are propelled by special locomotives at the rate of about eight miles an hour.

By Frank St. Austell.

The Bergen Railway, in Norway, which runs from Kristiania on the east to Bergen on the west, is one of the wonders of the world. At the highest point the track is 4,628 feet above the sea-level. Its total length is 305½ miles, and of this, 62 miles is the mountain section.

The expression "scenic railway" recalls to the majority of mankind riotous evenings at Shepherd's Bush among the artificial Rockies. He remembers how he climbed in a small uncomfortable car to the pinnacle of a dizzy steep, and then—



A section of one of the snow-sheds, showing the windows through which travellers may view the enchanting scenery.

Long stretches of these snow-sheds are built over the line to prevent its becoming blocked by the snow-drifts.

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as it seemed—fell sheer into excruciating depths leaving his interior economy far behind on the lone mountain top.

But there are other scenic railways, real ones before which the artificial and circumscribed specimens whose fare is the economical one of sixpence all the way pale into nothingness. And the king of such is the Bergen Railway in Norway.

It needs the lyrical gifts of some ancient Norwegian skald, some poet-laureate of a Viking long-ship, adequately to describe the wonders of the £3,000,000 marvel of engineering which the Norwegians have built between Kristiania and Bergen, bisecting their country in its broadest part.

An enthusiastic *ski*-jumper in mid-air.

Turning on *skis* is not an easy matter; the man in the centre shows the first movement; the right-hand figure is at the second stage, and the one on the left is just finishing the turn.

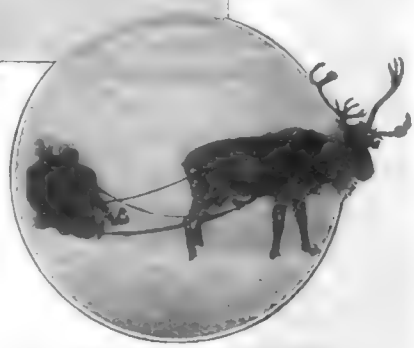
In 1883, the Norwegian Government began the long patient preliminary work necessary before the railway could be carried over the mountains to Kristiania. Such were the difficulties of the undertaking that a definite start could not be made till 1894, and the railway was not completed till 1909.

A glance at the map on page 231 will show even the prize duffer at geography that the Bergen Railway is an engineering miracle. The country it traverses used to be practically impassable, and previous to the railway the only communication between the east and west of Norway was either by sea along a very exposed coast, or by very difficult and indifferent roads across the mountains. It is almost impossible for the modern traveller in his comfortable railway carriage to realise the conditions that existed before the line was laid. Perhaps the long stretches of snow-sheds, built over the line to prevent its being blocked by snow-drifts, may help him a little.

However, the toil of the Norwegian engineers, who used to live through the winter practically isolated in mountain barracks, provides the traveller's delight, and enables him to take a winter or spring or summer holiday amid the most beautiful scenery in Norway, where, in these flabby days, he would never arrive on his own weary feet. *Ski-ing* is possible practically all the year round—you can *ski* in June at Finse, and on the Hardanger Glacier, where the Prince of Wales has recently spent a happy and healthy holiday.

The journey thither is the experience of a lifetime. Giant snow-ploughs clear the line, and as you are whisked along under protecting snow-sheds you catch glimpses, through thoughtfully provided windows in the sheds, of marvellous scenery, at one time enjoyed only by the reindeer and grouse, or hardy native mountaineer.

Finse, 4070 feet above the sea, is far beyond the tree line, and near Myrdal, where the tunnel is left behind, you can see, two thousand feet below, a magnificent valley, surrounded by imposing heights.



The little boat-like Lapland sleighs, drawn by reindeer, give a very picturesque touch to the snowy landscape.

At midsummer, when there is, practically speaking, no night at all, a carnival of winter sports is held at Finse, the events embracing

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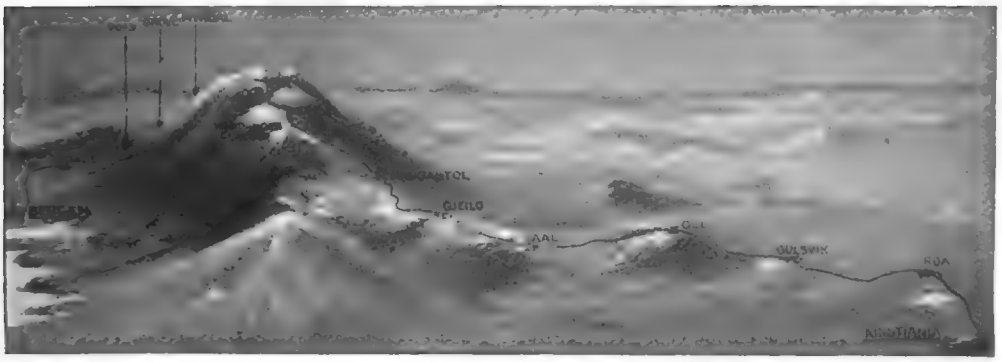

The Bergen Railway is an engineering miracle, as may be seen from this map showing its course from Kristiania to Bergen over what was once considered quite impassable country.

ski-jumping and cross-country races, tobogganing, and sleighing. Not the least interesting sight in this Norwegian fairyland are the herds of reindeer, single specimens of which are employed to draw the boat-like Lapland sleighs used in this part of the world.

A good reindeer will travel a hundred miles over the snow without rest, and a bad one will turn round and try to savage his driver. In this event the best thing is to reverse the sleigh and get underneath it!

Experts state that an angry reindeer is no joke, so that it is as well to do the right thing quickly.

Finse is the central station for snow-clearing work. This is done by great rotary snow-ploughs of 1,000 horse-power, which revolve a shovel-wheel at 140 revolutions a minute. All this energy is devoted to snow-clearing, and so they are propelled by special locomotives, at the rate of about eight miles an hour. They and the snow-sheds enable the Bergen Railway to maintain a regular service throughout the winter. Some idea of the difficulty this entails may be realised when it is remembered that there are $9\frac{1}{4}$ miles of tunnels, and $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles of snow-sheds completely covering the line, together with 28 miles of snow screens.

Ready for the fun, and there is lots of it in Norway at midsummer, especially at Finse, where a carnival of winter sports is held.

To the tourist, the Bergen Railway is a good friend, for it leads him into an all-the-year-round playground. He can go there and *ski* in the winter, and he can go and *ski* in the summer on the glacier. Summer tours can be made from the end of May till the middle of September, and in the latter month there is often splendid weather for weeks.

Even in these ungrateful days the holiday-maker can scarcely ask more than this of one particular holiday resort!

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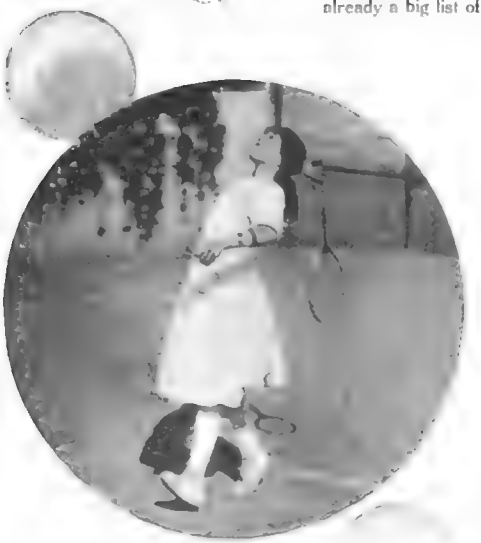
Fame at Fifteen

By E. H. D. Sewell.

Mdlle. Suzanne Lenglen is a lawn tennis prodigy who has been winning laurels on the Riviera, and will, if the Fates are propitious, be seen at Wimbledon this summer. Although only fifteen years of age, she has already a big list of successes behind her, and, it is safe to predict, a very rosy future before her.



"The Child," as she is called on the Riviera, has never had a lesson from a professional—

A little Parisienne has come into a certain amount of fame this year of grace. The Courts of the world have known famous Parisiennes in the past. If the latest arrival continues in the way in which she was going when I saw her last in the Sunny South, her fame will be as great as any of her predecessors', but in other courts.

Suzanne Lenglen was born in Paris on Her Majesty's birthday of the year 1899. So that, if we see her experimenting on the turf of Queen's Club and Wimbledon this year—as, if the dates do not clash with the French Championships, we shall—she will be easily the youngest player of either sex ever seen at these Meccas of lawn tennis.

Born fifteen years ago, "The Child," as Britishers on the Riviera have nicknamed the popular little lady, began to play when eleven years of age. On account of her health her people had taken a house at Compiègne, and it was there that she first showed an extraordinary instinct for the game. She had handled a racket for a few months only when she won second prize at the Chantilly tournament. That was in September, 1910, when she was second, with + 15.2, in the Ladies' Handicap.

The following year her triumphs began, for she took the Handicap Singles as well as the Doubles at Compiègne, and the second prize in the Ladies' Doubles at Le Touquet.

In 1913 she led off with the Championship of Picardy, and cups at Lille, Wimereux, and Le Touquet. It was at Wimereux she did a most remarkable thing, one which justified

—but her stroke methods and general knowledge of the game are marvellous for a player of her age.

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the most unusual happening on a lawn tennis or any other court, of a successful lady competitor being carried shoulder high by her enthusiastic admirers!

In the final for the Cup, Mdlle. Lenglen was opposed by Mrs. Colston, champion of Wales. The last named had won the first set, and the match stood at 5—2 in the second set, Mrs. Colston serving and the score 40 love. Yet Mdlle. Lenglen won the Cup. No wonder the spectators were carried away to such an extent as to "chair" her!

This is one of the most extraordinary victories in any lawn tennis match in or outside the big meetings of the world, and in itself stamped the winner as a coming champion.

The Cup at Le Touquet had never been won by a French lady until Mdlle. Lenglen added it to her list of fifteen first and three second prizes won in 1913.

This year she began by carrying off the Singles and Doubles at the Beau Site, Cannes, the Nice Lawn Tennis Club, and the Carlton, Cannes. But in a strong player like Miss Ryan she met her mistress at Monte Carlo, the hit and vigour of the Californian being too much for the Parisienne, who, however, was very far from being out of the hunt.

I watched every ball struck in this match, and, except that Mdlle. Lenglen rather defeated herself by getting a little upset at the minor worries incidental to all such affairs, such as a faulty decision or a ball-boy making a fool of himself, there was not all the difference between the two players the score would indicate.

The foregoing is an attempted *précis* of what "The Child" has done on hard courts. It is time now to discuss what she may do in the future, her methods, her characteristics, her strength and weaknesses.

Mdlle. Lenglen is amazingly active and almost too restless, so that occasionally her backhand strokes are accomplished in rather an uncomfortable fashion.

The feet are too wide apart here, which would not have been the case had she more mastery of the arts of footwork and balance.

So good, and so caustic, a judge as Mr. A. F. Wilding expressed himself to me in no uncertain terms about her. If Mdlle. Lenglen and her many admirers on and off the court have any doubts they may take heart of grace in what Wilding said:

"She is sure to do well, because her method is sound. I have heard a lot about these young prodigies, but she is the only good one I have ever seen."

This was from the Champion, who has played on every court in the world worth playing on, and who, clinching matters, is not given to speaking for the mere sake of phrasing empty compliments.

Those who see her for the first time on grass courts must, and will, be charitable, and make full allowance for the novelty of the thing—more, I hope, than do some of

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our critics in the case of cricketers suddenly transplanted on to a matting wicket. "The Child" is practically innocent of the vagaries of grass, so that what she would do starting an important match on hard turf, stopping on account of rain just when she was getting into her stride, to finish on mud, is, of course, uncertain. One has had no chance of judging her powers of adaptability.

Her successes began for Mdlle Lenglen in 1910, when she won second prize at the Chantilly tournament——

There is no reason why Mdlle. Lenglen should not soon excel on turf, and at least one why she should.

I refer to her activity. She is fairly quick on her feet without being remarkably so, but she is active enough and restless enough to get into the right position soon enough on grass. She seems always to me to take too much out of herself by unnecessary movements. This is her weakest point. She should watch such an expert as Mrs. Lambert Chambers—indeed, I have seen her doing so closely!—and imitate her quiet way of acquiring position without unnecessary expenditure of energy.

Her restlessness is Mdlle. Lenglen's *bête-noire*. For one thing it gets her more often on to the wrong foot than one so light, so lissom, and so young ought to get. A glance at the photos here published reveal what I mean, especially in two of the backhand strokes, which she has succeeded in making, it is true, but uncomfortably at best.

The feet are wide apart, as in the case of the lunge in fencing, and this would not have been the case had her judgment of footwork been good. But she has plenty of time in which to learn the arts and intricacies of footwork and balance, and only practice, and much of it at that, will get her into the habit of playing comfortably and so deriving full advantage from her splendid stroke-methods and general knowledge of the game.

Mdlle. Lenglen has never had lessons from a professional. At her home at Compiègne her father, who was a pretty good player himself and who takes the keenest possible interest in his daughter's success, marked out the court in numbered squares. He practised his daughter in playing the ball into the different squares according to the number he shouted. Accuracy of aim was greatly assisted by this sensible method.

On the gravel and sand courts of the Riviera Mdlle. Langlen always wore rope-soled canvas shoes fastened on criss-cross up the ankle, and was dressed in white drill. Shortness of skirt gave her freer scope for quick movement than is the case with some of her grown-up rivals, and as she bounced on to the court at the beginning of every match, as light as a cork, one felt instinctively that she was not to be beaten for want of activity.

——and in 1913 she won fifteen first and three second prizes, in addition to the cup at Le Touquet, which had never before been won by a Frenchwoman.

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A Case of Conjuring

A Music-Hall Romance.

By Margaret Chute.

I.

"Great snakes!" gasped Jimmy McHugh, conjurer, and snatched the *Artiste*—weekly organ of Variety-land—from its resting-place against the marmalade pot.

With shrewd eyes staring from his good-humoured, clean-shaven face, he read the paragraph that had startled him.

NEW DANCER'S PHENOMENAL SUCCESS.

At the Dulton Empire, this week, appears a new dancer, billed as Mara Leclair. This remarkable Oriental Dancer has a considerable Continental reputation, though in London she is entirely unknown, this being her first appearance. That it will not be her last is a foregone conclusion, and the manager who introduces Miss Leclair to a West-End audience may consider himself lucky.

Her turn is wholly admirable, and has caused a regular furore at Dulton during the week, where the unusual merits of this remarkable dancer have been duly recognised. Her appearance in the West-End should follow without delay.

A slow, whole-hearted grin creased Jimmy McHugh's face.

"Topping!" he murmured. "Simply topping! She's done the trick at last. 'Mara Leclair'—little Mabel Lesson, the queer kid who used to skip round the provinces as one of the sixteen Rosebuds! Jove! It's simply fine! Never thought she'd make good so soon, when she rushed off to Paris on her own. I must pop round to Dulton to-night and tell her I'm dashed glad. Splendid kid, that's what she is!"

It was nearly eleven o'clock that night when Mr. McHugh climbed out of a taxi, at the Dulton Empire stage-door.

"'Ullo!" remarked the man who guarded that sacred, evil-smelling portal. "'Evening, Jimmy! You back again? Long time since you topped our bill!"

Jimmy nodded.

"Yep! I say, I want to see Miss Leclair."

"Mara Leclair? Ah! Now *there's* an artiste—so long, Bob!—she's knocked 'em, from all I 'ear. Friend of yours? Nice girl, I will say. Going down? She's on now, I shouldn't wonder. Won't be long, though."

As Jimmy turned towards the swing-doors leading stagewards, they burst open, propelled from the farther side, and a tall man, in evening dress, came through.

His cigar was excellent, the cut of his coat beyond reproach, and his expression simply villainous. Frowning, he collided with Jimmy, and stepped back, muttering:

"Confound! Oh—it's you, McHugh! How are you?" This query in a very casual tone.

"Fine, thanks. And you, Mr. Dicks?"

"All right," grunted the controller of England's greatest music-circuit, and walked on swiftly, shouting, as he passed the familiar stage-door keeper, "Coming back later!"

"What's he want, I wonder?" mused the conjurer, propping open the swing door.

"Come to see Mara Leclair, you bet your sweet life!" supplied the door-keeper. "Good for her, if 'e *'as*. 'E'll book 'er—sure as I'm alive!"

"Hope he does—best thing that could happen. He didn't look too pleased, though," said Jimmy, and pattered down the stone staircase to the stage.

As he reached that abode of grease-paint and limelight, a strong smell of incense greeted him, and a strange, unnatural silence.

"Who's on?" he asked, grasping the dirty shirt-sleeve of a passing stage-hand.

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"Mara Leclair—turn just started—watch 'er—she's *great!*" replied the coatless one.

By slow degrees McHugh wormed his way past the crowd filling the "wings" till he reached the Prompt Corner. A small, blue-chinned man, sucking a pencil, wheeled as the newcomer jerked his elbow.

"What the—oh! How do, Jimmy?" he burst forth, in a fierce whisper. "Not seen you for ages. When are you coming to us again? Want to see me, eh?"

"Not exactly," whispered Jimmy. "Fact is, I've come to shake hands with Mara Leclair—used to know her before she went abroad. Made a success, hasn't she?"

"*Rather!* Goes like wildfire—ought to get booked for years. A trial week, that's all she's got here. Dicks was round to-night—wanted to see her before she went on—came just too late. He's gone in front, till she's finished. Half a shake, old lad——"

His hand shot up, and a sudden flood of steel blue light beat down upon the stage. Craning his head round the prompt corner, Jimmy caught sight of the girl who had made such a success—the girl he had come tearing across London to congratulate.

Clad in a wonderful Eastern dress, she swayed sensuously in the limelight, her long, Oriental eyes half closed, her lips a bow of scarlet set in a pale, oval face. Backwards and forwards her slender body twisted and twirled, above beautiful bare feet, till, as the music reached its climax, she flung out her arms, and fell headlong to the ground.

A gasp came from the audience, as the tableau curtains swung down. The stage manager, his eyes sparkling, waited for the burst of applause that followed inevitably; then he signalled them up again—and yet again.

Pushing past Jimmy, he dashed forward and helped the girl to her feet, leading her towards the lowered curtains for a "curtain call."

"Great!" he muttered as he fled back to his corner, and pressed several bells, all at once. Then he forgot that such a person as Mara Leclair existed, in the frenzy of preparing for the next turn.

Swathed in a long scarlet wrap the dancer was opening the door of the "change room,"—her private property for the week—when a figure in a tweed overcoat loomed large before her.

"Mr. McHugh!" she cried, her eyes wide and shining. "Is it *really* you? Why, where have you sprung from? I—I thought——"

Jimmy grasped the hand she extended.

"Came over to see you for a second," he whispered, stammering a little. "Read about you in the paper. Simply had to come. By Jupiter, I'm jolly glad!"

She smiled, a sad, tired smile.

"It's good of you!" she told him. "I've been longing to see some of my old pals. I'm such a stranger here; don't know a soul on the bill. Come in, won't you? This is my room—had to have one to myself, I've got so many changes. Try that basket, it's quite safe, and chairs are scarce. Well?"

"Well?" echoed Jimmy. "Lord—but it's fine to see you again! D'you remember that tour on the Triple Circuit, when we first met? And how I stuck on the same bill with you and the Rosebuds, for six weeks, by a lucky fluke!"

"You were awfully decent to me," said the dancer. "I was miserable till you came along and took pity on me."

She sighed, and looked at him anxiously, with long dark eyes.

"You haven't changed a scrap—except that I hear you're quite a star. And I——"

"You're just the same," burst out Jimmy. "A jolly little pal—and ambitious, I'll bet—as you always were. I shall never forget that day you told me you were sick of being a 'Rosebud,' and meant to spend your savings on a trip to Paris to try your luck in Continental halls. And I lost sight of you, from that day till this morning, when I read your notice in the *Artiste!*"

"And so you came on purpose to congratulate me?" she said quietly. "That's funny!"

"Funny?" repeated Jimmy. "What d'you mean?"

"If you only knew," whispered Mara. "Congratulations aren't what I deserve. Condolences—that's nearer the mark."

He was puzzled. "I don't understand. You've made a real 'hit'; and yet you——"

"I'm worse off than I've been for years!"

Nervously, she looked towards the door.

"I—Mr. McHugh, I can't explain now—someone's coming round to see me, almost at once. But if you—if you—care to *help* me, wait till I'm alone again—and I'll try and explain."

"Help you? Why, of course I will. I'd give my life to——"

He stopped suddenly as a knock came at the door. Mara gave him one glance, full of terror and misery, then called:

"Come in."

Mr. Dicks, his cigar a little shorter than

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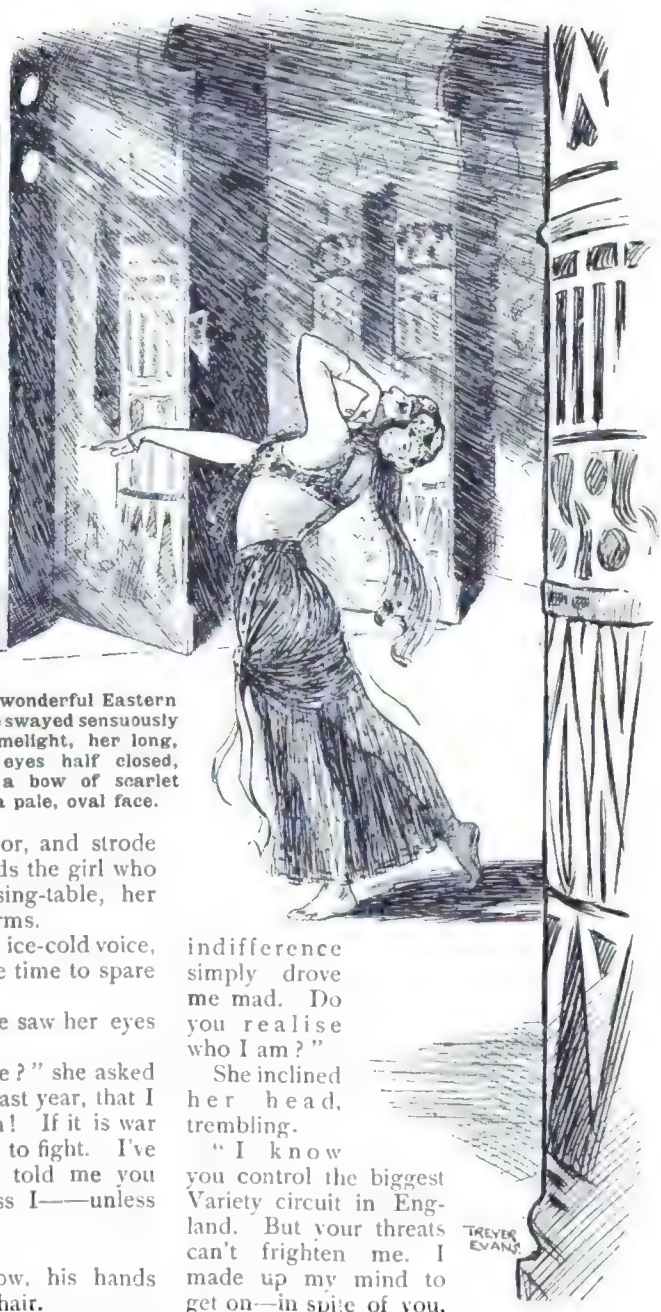
before, stood in the doorway, nearly filling it. Slowly his keen eyes took in the figures before him, and he smiled.

"Are you free now?" His voice reached both listeners, cool and cutting. "I see Mr. — er — McHugh is privileged. A friend of yours, Miss Leclair?"

She said "Yes" faintly, and Jimmy rose.

"So long!" He laughed uneasily. "Won't keep you any longer—glad to have seen you. Good-night. Good-night, Mr. Dicks."

The man in the doorway allowed his eye-lids to flicker for an instant as he stood aside to let the conjurer pass. When the tweed overcoat vanished, he turned swiftly, shut the door, and strode across the narrow room towards the girl who sat, cowering, by the dressing-table, her jewelled head bowed on her arms.



Clad in a wonderful Eastern dress, she swayed sensuously in the limelight, her long, Oriental eyes half closed, her lips a bow of scarlet set in a pale, oval face.

"Now——" he began in an ice-cold voice, "now perhaps you have a little time to spare—for me?"

She raised her head and he saw her eyes fill with burning tears.

"Why have you come to me?" she asked him. "I told you in Berlin, last year, that I never wanted to see you again! If it is war between us, then I'm prepared to fight. I've been fighting ever since you told me you could smash my career unless I——unless I——"

"Unless you married me."

He was close to her now, his hands clenched on the back of her chair.

"Mara—when I saw you dancing in Berlin I fell in love with you, asked you to marry me, and you—refused!"

He smiled evilly.

"I wanted you then. I want you now. You were independent, you chose to think you could get on without me, and your indifference simply drove me mad. Do you realise who I am?"

She inclined her head, trembling.

"I know you control the biggest Variety circuit in England. But your threats can't frighten me. I made up my mind to get on—in spite of you, and——"

"It wasn't easy, was it?"

Mr. Dicks caught her face between his hands and gazed deep into her eyes.

"You've had a mighty struggle to get into England, haven't you? If you'd listen to me, if you had me working for you—

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instead of against you—you'd be drawing hundreds a week to-day, with a world-wide name. As it is—well, I've kept you out! I don't know how you got this trial week; some small agent I suppose."

His laugh was very cruel.

She wrenched herself free. "Yes!" she cried, stung beyond endurance. "Some small agent got me the chance I've been struggling for all these months! Oh, you fiend, you fiend! I didn't believe one man had so much power—or could be so devilish. Every time I failed, I thought it was just Fate—that luck was against me. I wouldn't believe the ghastly truth—that *you* were killing my career!"

"But I was!" His eyes travelled over her from head to heels. "And I'm going on killing it—stifling it—choking it—unless, my dear Mara, you are prepared to be reasonable. You've got to London. Now, be candid: what good has this week done you?"

Mara started to her feet. "*What!*" she gasped. "Are you to blame for this, too? Are you spoiling my chances even now? Oh, it's unbelievable!"

"Explain, please!" commanded the music-hall magnate. "What is unbelievable?"

There was silence for a minute in the stifling, gas-lit room. Then Mara Leclair spoke, very low, very bitterly.

"When I succeeded in getting this trial week, I thought I was safe at last. I'm not mock-modest—I know my work is good, and I believed that once I could be seen in London, even for a trial week, I should make a success and offers would follow—London offers, that I've been striving for all this time. Well, I've made a success—a bigger success than I dreamt was possible. Have you read my notices?"

The tall man shrugged his shoulders. "And if I have?" he inquired.

"You must realise that I've 'got there'—even if you hadn't heard the applause that came to me to-night. Yes—I've made good. But the week is nearly over—Thursday, isn't it?—*and not one single offer has come my way!* Till you appeared to-night, not a solitary manager or agent has been near me. If they've been in front, they've not troubled to come round afterwards. And I can't understand it. What does it mean? What have I done?"

She flung out her questions, facing him boldly.

"It isn't what you've done—it's what *I'm* doing," said Maurice Dicks.

Then she knew.

"You mean you are keeping me out still?" she whispered.

"Yes," said the tall man. "And you'll remain out unless you are prepared to——"

She stopped him with a gesture.

"Why have you come?" she asked, half brokenly. "What do you want?"

"I want to make you realise exactly how you stand in this matter," said the man brutally. "And I want to ask you—for the second time—to marry me, or face the consequences."

"Consequences?" Her dry lips scarcely moved.

"Yes. If you marry me you'll be a star—a great star. If not—at the end of this week you'll go back to the Continent, and stay there! My dear Mara, I have only to indicate my wishes and the rest of the managers will follow my lead, as they've been following it. Variety-land is one huge web, and you can't set foot on it unless we choose. It's up to you! What is your answer? You see what I have done so far—so be careful."

Mara looked at him, a long, straight look. Then she walked towards the door and held it open.

"Good-night, Mr. Dicks," she said proudly. "My answer is the same now as it was six months ago, in Berlin! I don't love you; I won't marry you. I've fought you before, and I'm prepared to go on fighting. One day I shall win—and then you'll be sorry."

He made a sudden movement forward, as if to seize her in his arms; then he drew back, frightened by the look in her blazing eyes.

"All right!" he said, and shrugged his shoulders. "It isn't going to hurt *me*, remember. Beat me if you can, my dear girl. I hold all the cards. I pull all the strings. It will have to be a very remarkable trick that throws me off my balance and turns you into top dog. Good-night."

He sauntered casually towards the narrow door marked "exit" and vanished. Mara watched him go, then turned blindly towards her dressing-table, and prepared to remove her elaborate make-up and costume. Her face was hard and set, her brow puckered with wearying, saddening thoughts.

Jimmy McHugh waited at the stage-door till she came out, and bundled her into a taxi, without a word.

"Now," he remarked gaily, "perhaps you'll tell me what's wrong? If I'm to help

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—as you hinted that I might—I must know all about everything."

So she told him, and Jimmy listened, sitting tense and rigid by her side with clenched fists.

"The swine!" he muttered. "The wretched swine! It's scarcely credible, but you only need a short acquaintance with music-halls to realise that it's true—it's possible! One man, if he goes against a turn can bar it absolutely, unless——" He paused.

"Unless?" queried Mara.

"Unless the turn becomes of such world-wide value that other managers *can't afford* to be without it. Now, at present, you are a nonentity, in English halls, so Dicks is having an easy job to keep you out. But if you *ceased* to be a nonentity——"

Mara started to her feet. "*What!*" she gasped. "Are you to blame for this, too? Are you spoiling my chances even now? Oh, it's unbelievable!"

"He couldn't hurt me?"

"Exactly. And that's where I come in, Mara."

"What are you going to do?"

"I'm going to perform a conjuring trick—a simple little conjuring trick, with your help. And if it comes off you will have every manager rushing to secure your services—with Dicks following suit willy-nilly. Are you prepared to trust me and do what I tell you?"

Mara said "Yes," and meant it.

II.

When the first house at the Dulton Empire was half through the following evening, Mara Leclair had failed to put in an appearance. Frantic telephone messages served to deepen the mystery. The dancer could not be found, and when her number should have gone up, that of the following turn blazed forth instead, to the unbounded disgust of a large and expectant audience.

About ten o'clock, Jimmy McHugh rang up the *Daily Flier*, and before midnight an enterprising reporter had interviewed the famous conjurer, also the blue-chinned stage manager. Then he had fled back to Fleet Street, armed with several photographs of Mara Leclair, and a big "scoop" for his rag.

The next morning the *Daily Flier* burst into mighty headlines concerning the "Mysterious Disappearance of a Dancer"—with illustrations. The facts, it appeared, were as follows:

> Miss Leclair, the famous Continental dancer now appearing at the Dulton Empire, had left her rooms, bound for that admirable music-hall—and vanished into space! For she did not reach her destination, and agonised inquiries failed to throw any light on the mystery. The dancer had completely disappeared.

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Mr. James McHugh—also of the music-hall profession—obligingly informed a *Daily Flier* representative that Miss Leclair seemed in the best of health and spirits when he left her, late in the afternoon. In fact, so Mr. McHugh was good enough to hint, the lady had good reason for being cheerful, as she had recently signed some splendid contracts, and was making a real "hit" at Dulton.

So the mystery deepened. . . .

All England joined in the search for the Missing Dancer. Evening papers took up the case, with gusto and many adjectives, and the following morning every "daily" in the kingdom was screaming "Where is Mara Leclair?"—with photographs! People who had never seen her began to regard her as a dear friend, owing to constant repetition of her name and face.

For five days the frenzied search went on. She was authentically discovered—false alarm! She was seen here, there, and everywhere, by scores of amateur detectives—further false alarms! Illustrated weeklies devoted complete pages of art paper to representations of her face and figure, with "settings" by themselves. And Jimmy McHugh was interviewed a dozen times a day, in his impregnable position as the individual who saw Miss Leclair a few hours before her disappearance.

Finally, various powerful music hall magnates—through "our representative"—rushed into print and bold statements to the effect that Mara Leclair was under contract to appear at their Halls at a fabulous salary, and would dazzle mighty audiences at vast sums per minute, immediately she was found. In short, as a colossal boom Mara's disappearance simply beat all previous records.

The frenzy of search parties, rewards, and conjectures was at its height when a dusty motor pulled up before a certain Cornish farmhouse, and Jimmy McHugh jumped out. Mara came rushing to the gate to meet him, and he crushed her hands between his own.

"What did I tell you?" he cried triumphantly. "It's worked! You're famous!" Which, though astonishing, was a true statement.

"Through a conjuring trick," laughed Mara. "And now?"

"You've only got to show your nose in London and offers will pour in! Such is human nature. Dicks? Oh, he's mad, of course. But he's powerless; we've started a current that he can't fight against—so he's simply got to turn and swim with it, to save his rotten skin. Oh, he's a bad egg, is Dicks."

Her eyes clouded. "Let's forget him," she said hastily. "I—I don't know how to thank you—Jimmy."

He started. "Don't try—in words," he said, with shining eyes. "Mara dear, considering the fact that a conjuring trick saved you, I think there's only one thing left for you to do."

"What?" she whispered, blushing furiously.

"Marry the conjurer!" stated Jimmy McHugh.

She put her hands on his shoulders and gazed into his eyes.

"Silly-billy!" she said. "I always meant to!"

AN INITIAL DIFFICULTY.

I carved two hearts upon a tree
(An act of youthful folly),
And underneath an "H" and "P"—
The former letter meant for me,
The latter one for "Polly."

I carved two hearts upon a tree;
But "P," which stood for Polly,
Within six months or so by me,
With pains, was altered to a "D,"
And served instead for "Dolly."

Those hearts entwined upon a tree
Now make me melancholy.
For how can I out of a "D,"
Which was originally "P,"
Now carve an "M" for "Molly"?

Ada Leonora Harris.

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£1000 IN PRIZES.

GREAT NEW PICTURE PUZZLE COMPETITION.

THE EDITOR OF THE ROYAL MAGAZINE is giving away the most colossal sum ever offered to the readers of a monthly magazine—no less than £1000 (one thousand pounds) in prizes for a simple competition.

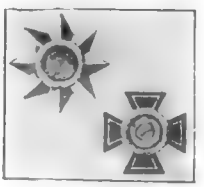
On the following page you will find a set of twelve pictures representing the names of railway stations which have been selected by the Editor, and further sets of pictures will appear monthly in THE ROYAL MAGAZINE. The big cash prizes are offered to the readers who discover the names of the railway stations represented.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

Competitors are required to write clearly in ink beneath each picture the name of the station they believe it represents, fill in their names and addresses in the space provided, cut out the page, and keep it until further instructions appear in THE ROYAL MAGAZINE.

First look at the example. You will see that the picture shows a star and a cross. The correct answer is STARCROSS.

EXAMPLE:



STARCROSS.

A PRIZE OF £500

will be awarded to the competitor from whom we receive a complete set of pictures with all the names correct.

Prizes of £200, £100, and £50, . . .
Ten £5 Pathephones (with records), and
One Hundred Prizes of £1 each . .

will be paid to the competitors who send in respectively the next most correct lists.

READ THESE CONDITIONS CAREFULLY.

1. Write the name of each station clearly in ink. One name only is allowed under each picture.
2. No alterations may be made in the names. If you have made a mistake, cross out the word and write it afresh. When you have filled up your list cut it out and keep it till we tell you what to do with it.
3. Competitors may send in as many complete series of pictures as they please, but each complete series will be judged independently. Sets must be fastened together in the top left-hand corner.
4. The prize of £500 will be paid to the competitor from whom the Editor receives a complete series of pictures with all the names correct of the actual stations as represented. If no competitor sends in a correct list the prize of £500 will go to the sender of the most nearly correct list. In the event of ties the prizes will be divided.
5. The Editor of the ROYAL will not be responsible for the loss or non-delivery of any attempt, and proof of posting will not be accepted as proof of receipt or delivery.
6. No member of the staff of the ROYAL MAGAZINE may enter for this competition.
7. Only the names of railway stations found in Pearson's List of Railway Stations will be admitted. This list is obtainable for 3d. through any newsagent or bookstall, or it will be sent post free for three penny stamps by The Publisher, Room 24, THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.
8. Competitors must agree to abide by these conditions, and the Editor's decision is in every respect final.

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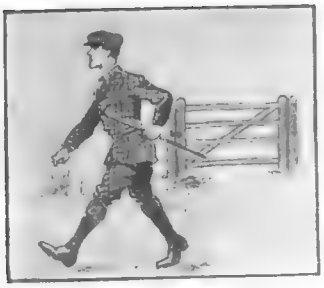
FIRST AND SECOND SETS OF PICTURE PUZZLES (Nos. 1—12).



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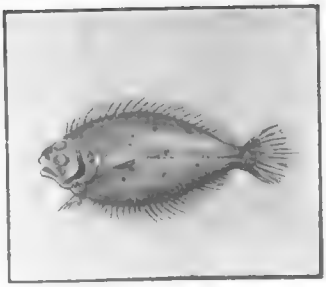

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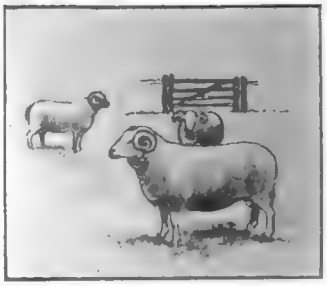

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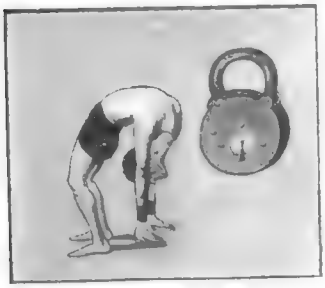

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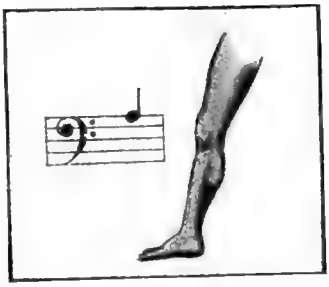

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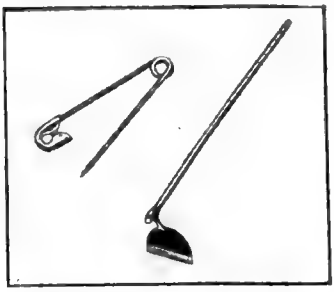

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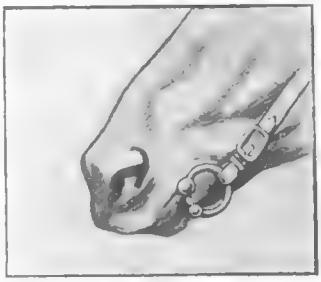

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A Story of War in the Future.

By John Woodhill Meadows.

I.

"Godblessmysoul!" said the admiral rapidly.

He rose from his seat in the car, and leaning forward, shouted into the chauffeur's ear.

"Here, Bates—Bobstay—whatever your name is—stop her!" he bawled. "Stop this thing, quick!"

The chauffeur, whose name was Evans, jerked on the brakes and pulled the car up dead.

"Look here," spluttered the admiral, "you see that young fellow in the tweed suit going up the Strand there? Run after him and stop him—say I want to speak to him. Hurry!"

The chauffeur shut off his engine, jumped down, and made off, at a sailor's trot, in the direction the admiral had pointed out.

"What's the matter?" asked the admiral's daughter, not very excitedly, for she was used to her father's ways.

"It's Pomeroy—Juniper—can't remember his name—the fellow who had to leave the Service last year because they said he'd sold a torpedo manual to Germany," rattled on the admiral, opening the door of the car. "But I'm certain he didn't do it. Best man who ever trod deck. Bit mad on the scientific side. You *must* remember him, Peggy. I've got it. His name's Protheroe. All right. Shan't be a minute."

Peggy's eyes followed her father eagerly. Did she remember Dick Protheroe? Would she ever forget him?

Could she ever forget those golden, halcyon days at Southsea? that magic evening in the garden under the stars when he had asked her to be his wife? Would she ever forget how he had crushed her to him and rained down kisses on her blushing, upturned face—the light in his honest grey eyes, the joyous spring in his step as he went away at last, promising to come and see her father in the morning?

But in the morning he had been arrested, on the worst charge that can be brought against an officer in his Majesty's navy—the charge of selling his country's secrets to a foreign power.

The trial had followed rapidly. They had been unable to prove anything against him. He was acquitted. But the cloud of suspicion still hung over him. Though he was not officially responsible for the book, not being a torpedo man, it had been in his possession, and it was found in the hands of a foreign spy. People would not believe that there was not "something in it." His career was ruined.

Peggy had written to him—warm-hearted,

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impulsive letters, telling him that she still believed in him, that she knew he would never do such a thing. Her father, though he knew nothing of the attachment between them, and Peggy dared not tell him, had insisted on the young lieutenant's innocence in and out of season.

But since that evening in the garden, Peggy had not seen him—had not heard a word of him. She thought he must have gone abroad.

She must see him. She slipped out of the car and followed the admiral's short, square figure.

The chauffeur had darted after the young man in the shabby tweed suit and grasped him by the arm.

"Hello, Pettifer—Parbuckle—can't remember your name—remember your face, though," puffed the admiral, coming up at that moment. "How are you? What are you doing now?"

"How do you do, sir?" answered Protheroe awkwardly. "I've just come up to London to get some—fittings. But I didn't expect anyone to recognise me," he added, a trifle bitterly.

"Rubbish!" the admiral snorted. "I know you didn't do that thing, Protheroe. You're looking deucedly thin and pulled down, though."

He glanced at the lean, brown face, the shabby suit, the broken boots of the young man before him.

"Are you hard up, man?" he asked—Bulldog Brabazon was nothing if not downright. "If there's anything I can do——"

"No thank you, sir," said Protheroe, flushing. "It's awfully good of you, but I'm all right. I'm working on an invention. I've some private money, you know, and I'm putting it all into the thing, that's all. I've a little workshop way up on the Yorkshire coast——"

"Ah, you were always keen on inventions!" said the admiral. Then his tone changed suddenly.

"Look here, boy. Listen to me. *Clear yourself.* Find out who *did* take that confounded book, and show 'em up. Then come back to the Service. I'll make it all right."

"You're awfully good—" began young Protheroe. Then he faltered and stopped dead in the middle of his sentence. His eyes left the admiral's and looked beyond him. His face paled suddenly, and he bit his lip in an effort at self-control.

The admiral swung round. Peggy was just behind him, and if Protheroe's face was guilty, the girl's was positively tell-tale.

The admiral grasped the situation in a flash. He needed no explanation. His firm mouth shut suddenly hard and set.

"So this is the state of things?" he remarked in a tone of deadly calm. "Behind my back——"

"No, sir," interrupted young Protheroe hotly. "I asked Miss Brabazon to be my wife nearly a year ago. I was coming to speak to you the following morning, but they arrested me. After the trial I cleared out. I couldn't keep Miss Brabazon to her promise after that. I've tried to clear myself, but so far I've failed. I give you my word of honour I haven't seen your daughter, nor written to her since that evening, and I *won't* till I've won the right."

The admiral glanced from the girl's flushed face to the young man's bronzed one.

Then he nodded slowly.

"I knew you wouldn't do anything that wasn't above board," he said. "No, Peggy," he caught the look of entreaty in the girl's eyes unflinchingly, "he must win back his name. I believe in you, my boy, but till you've done something to clear yourself you can't marry a daughter of Bob Brabazon. Peggy, go back to the car."

The admiral waited till she was out of earshot. A sudden appeal that was almost pitiful shone in the old man's eyes.

"Clear yourself, boy," he insisted hoarsely. "Do something to save your name, and win her."

He held out his hand. The young man gripped it for a moment and then turned away.

An hour later he was in the Great Northern Express, with a package of mysterious brass fittings on the seat beside him, racing back to his little experimental shed on the Yorkshire coast above Spurn Head.

II.

Ten days afterwards the blow fell with staggering suddenness.

There had been a trifling quarrel between Britain and Germany—a short period of what is known as "strained relations," during which the cruiser squadrons in the Atlantic were recalled by wireless, the ships in the Reserve Division mobilised, a hasty mobilisation of troops begun.

And in the middle of it all Germany struck. Without any formal declaration of war she launched her whole battle fleet out into the North Sea in one vast armada, while

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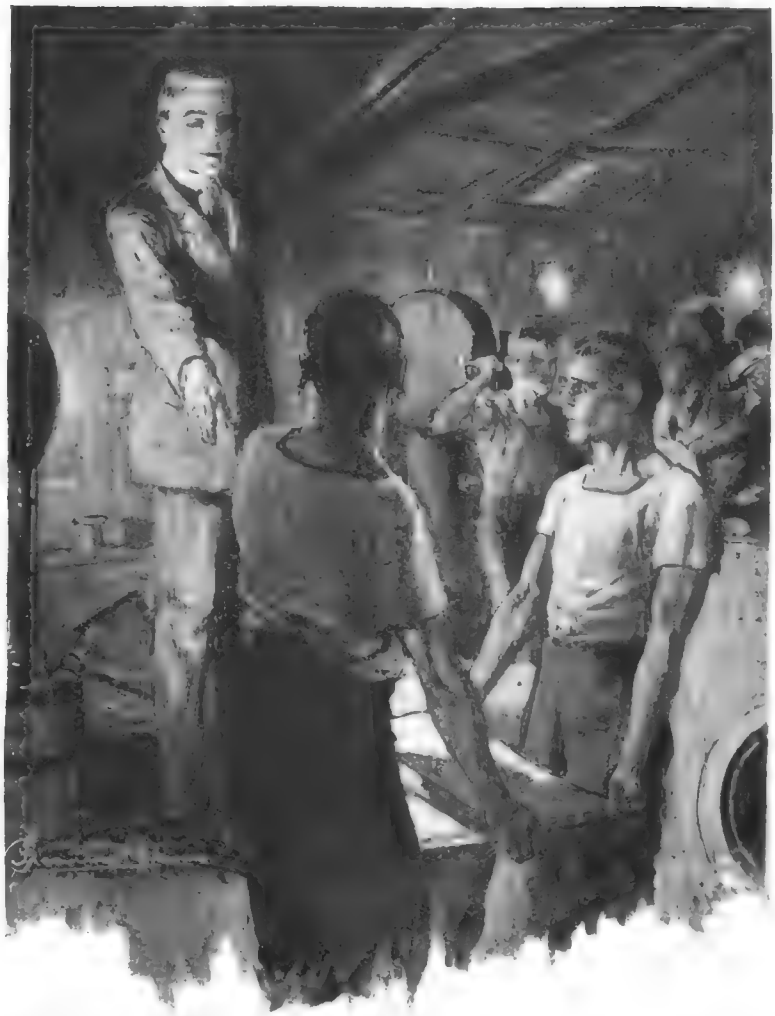
behind them, protected by an encircling ring of cruisers and destroyers came a great flotilla of transports crammed with troops. It was the Invasion.

The British battle squadrons were already at sea with decks cleared for action, patrolling the tumbling waste of waters between the coast and Germany. Long, low, grim destroyers were shooting like snakes through the smoking seas. Overhead, waterplanes skimmed to and fro on reconnaisance.

And meanwhile, in a little shed hidden away in a secluded corner on the coast above Spurn Head, a gang of men—ex-sailors every one of them—were toiling feverishly day and night on an odd-looking craft that once might have been a destroyer, though now she was like nothing under the sun.



And to and fro among them—commanding, directing, exhorting in the deadly calm and level tones of one who is seething inwardly, moved a lean, brown-faced young man.

And to and fro among them—commanding, directing, exhorting in the deadly calm and level tones of one who is seething inwardly, moved a lean, brown-faced young man in a shabby tweed suit and broken boots, with dark rings beneath his eyes that told of days and nights of sleepless, restless, unremitting work.

"If we can only get finished in time," breathed Protheroe over and over again. "Another twenty-four hours—twenty—tweive—if only we can get it done in time."

III.

"Good Lord!" said the admiral, "they've tricked us after all!"

He stood in the forward fire-control station high up on the mast of the *Magnificent*, and stared through his binoculars across the tossing sea, veiled and shrouded in the mists of the early dawn.

At nightfall the previous evening the German Fleet had been sighted steaming northward—heading, it seemed, for the Tyne, or the Forth, or perhaps Rosyth.

A scout in a waterplane, hovering high up above the enemy's vessels, had seen them, and wirelessed the information back to the

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admiral in chief command. The little brass key had ticked out most of its message, and then a shell from an aerial twelve-pounder on the deck of a German battleship had burst plump on the waterplane's engine. The shattered machine, with two dead men aboard her, had dropped like a stone into the tossing grey sea below.

But the message winged its way to its destination. The two Super-Dreadnought battle squadrons and the first cruiser squadron went racing north to head off the Germans.

The interrupted information had stopped short without saying a word of the enemy's transports, so Admiral Brabazon, with a weak battle squadron, three cruisers, and a handful of destroyers, was left hovering off the Yorkshire coast to guard against a possible attack on the Humber—a swift, sudden, paralysing raid on Hull, Immingham, Grimsby, the Admiralty oil fuel tanks at Killingholme, and the wireless station at Humberstone.

And it had come. Out of the mist that hung over the horizon, the old admiral saw bearing down upon him, not a few transports and destroyers, but two fast battle squadrons in line ahead, a long, low flotilla of destroyers, and behind, a huddled mass of transports with a ring of cruisers guarding them.

Bulldog Brabazon shut up his binoculars and went down to the conning tower.

"This is going to be tough work, Vincent," he said to his Flag Captain. "Sound general quarters, and ring down to the engine-room for full speed ahead. We'll go and meet 'em."

The bo'suns' pipes whistled shrilly, the bugles blared, the men, stripped to the waist, ran to their places at the guns. And with his mouth shut tight in a thin, straight line, his massive, square head poked forward, the old sea-dog led his fleet into battle.

It was tough work, as the admiral had said. The great guns in the turrets thundered, the shells whistled and screeched and boomed overhead; great rending, tearing, ear-splitting crashes rang every time one of them struck home on turret or casemate or armoured side; burning splinters flew right and left—and a "splinter" is a torn fragment the size of a piano.

The British ships, hopelessly outnumbered, had to retire. Already their upper works had been shot away, and small fires were springing up here and there where the enemy's shells had got home. Bridges were battered and twisted, great gaping holes torn in decks, funnels riddled, bows and bulwarks bashed and bent as if by collisions.

But under a hail of projectiles that battered them from stem to stern, the British Fleet staggered and ploughed along, retiring slowly, sullenly, fighting every knot of the way—fighting till, as Vincent said, they looked more like sieves than ships.

At last they were off Spurn Head, and edging in towards the Humber mouth.

This was the German admiral's opportunity, and he seized it like the tactician he was. Out from behind the line of grey battleships he let loose his destroyers—long, venomous, viperish craft, the black smoke belching from their funnels, the water shooting up at their forefeet as they came. Under a fierce covering fire from the battleships behind them, they bore down on the retiring British line.

They faced a tornado. The leading ones were knocked clean out of the water by the shells from Brabazon's big guns or swept from stem to stern by volleys from the 12-pounder batteries till their decks were strewn with fragments of funnels, ironwork, and men.

But still the others came on—came on till they were within a few hundred yards of the British line; then, turning, they sent their gleaming torpedoes slithering through the water like steel sharks, and, turning again, made off, with the British 12-pounder shells hammering upon their low sterns, to come on again a little later.

Already one torpedo had got home. It struck the *Menelaus*, Brabazon's second-best ship, clean amidships. There was a dull, reverberating roar and the ear-splitting crash of rending armour. A great column of water shot up at her side, and she began to fill.

With her crew frantically lowering collision mats over the gap, she made for the shore and ran aground on a sandy spit.

The German destroyers were coming nearer and nearer, getting more and more daring. The battleship line was drawing in. Brabazon's men were sick and dizzy with the unending roar of guns and the crash of tearing metal. It was the last stand. The old admiral knew that there was nothing for it now but to fight as long as his ships would float, and then go down with them.

"There's something out at sea, sir," said Vincent hopefully.

The admiral peered through his glasses through the smoke that hung over the German line. Faintly he could see a line of

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big craft beyond. A moment's exultation shone in his eyes. Then he shrugged his shoulders.

"The rest of the Germans," he said quietly.

Then came a deafening crash as a shell struck the wall of the conning tower. Brabazon and Vincent were flung to the floor together in what seemed to be a whirl of fire and smoke and vivid red stars.

The admiral pulled himself together and sat up. There was a great, gaping, jagged-edged hole in the side of the tower. Feeling as if the top of his head had been taken off, he felt his way towards the light and air that came in through the gap. Behind him he heard Vincent struggling to his feet.

The admiral peered out, holding on to a twisted speaking tube for support.

"God bless my soul!" he said.

IV.

Out of the haze of smoke, between the British line and the German, came the queerest-looking craft that was ever seen on any sea. She looked like a destroyer of an obsolete type, with her turtleback forward and her low flush deck aft. But she had no funnels, no guns, no torpedo tubes—nothing but a conning tower forward and a series of round projections like casemates along her sides. In a momentary lull in the firing the *chug-chug-chug* of a powerful petrol engine sounded from her as she came gliding along.

The Germans were obviously just as puzzled at her appearance as the British. Not a shot was fired at her. The semaphore on the bridge of the German flagship wagged inquiringly, but no answer came from the mystery ship until she reached a point opposite the centre of the British line, and about a mile nearer the Germans. And then, from a stumpy staff at her stern broke out, blazing and defiant, the folds of the White Ensign. At this stupendous piece of insolence a roar of cheering burst out from every ship in the British line.

A splash of flame came from the turret of a German battleship, and a shell flew screaming at the stranger. At the same moment tiny flickers of vivid red light flashed at the narrow apertures in the casemates of the mystery ship; a faint red haze began to appear round her.

But two thousand yards before it reached its target the shell suddenly burst in mid-air. A shower of projectiles that followed did the same thing.

A heavy shell from one of the 14-inch guns on the German flagship screamed in the air, but burst harmlessly, its fragments dropping into the sea. Around the mystery ship there seemed to be a magic zone, two thousand yards deep, that no shell could penetrate; inevitably they burst harmlessly upon the fringe of the red haze.

"Extraordinary thing," said Vincent peering over the admiral's shoulder.

The admiral said nothing at all.

A destroyer broke out from the German line and shot towards the mystery ship. Plunging through the seas she came, the 12-pounder below her bridge pumping out shell after shell, but every one burst as soon as it entered the red haze that surrounded the stranger.

The destroyer swung round; a glittering torpedo shot from her deck, leapt into the water and went gliding through the waves. It reached the edge of the red haze, and there burst impotently.

The destroyer headed round again, and with the black smoke belching from her funnels dashed straight at the impregnable ship. Nearer and nearer she went; three thousand yards separated them, two thousand five hundred, and then she was suddenly dimmed in the red haze.

Two shining torpedoes lay in her tubes ready to be fired. With a simultaneous roar they burst in their tubes, and her deck was a gaping shambles. A second after the magazines below exploded, tore the entrails out of her and flung them into the air, and the hull went to the bottom like a tin can that had suddenly filled with water.

And then the strange ship moved towards the Germans. Every gun in the line was trained upon her. She passed with a cloud of shells bursting round her—but bursting harmlessly at the fringe of the red haze. Another destroyer went to the bottom, blown to smithereens by her own torpedoes.

And silently, deliberately, remorselessly the impregnable ship moved through the grey seas towards the German flagship, the *Potsdam*. A few men on her quarter-deck opened fire with their rifles, but without effect. The mystery ship was evidently armoured well enough to be bullet-proof at that range, at any rate. Nearer and nearer came the red haze. The gunners in the turrets of the battleship lost their nerve, and ran screaming. The ship still held on her course.

Then a faint red haze lapped the edge of the *Potsdam's* decks. Every shell that lay in the breeches of the port guns, or in the turrets behind them, burst, wrecking gun and turret and all. The red haze swept on.

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Here and there in an ammunition hoist below, a shell burst, tearing up the wall of the hoist and flinging the pieces down into the magazines. And then, with a dull, booming roar, both magazines exploded.

The *Potsdam's* decks bulged upwards, great sheets of flame and acrid smoke pouring through the rents. The explosion tore the bottom clean out of her. She gave a convulsive shudder and began to settle down into the sea, her crew leaping from her decks into the water below.

Panic seized the Germans. They fled. This weird, uncanny thing, this ship that was invulnerable to shell and torpedo, but that could wreak such ghastly havoc with its mysterious and fearful weapon, broke their nerve. Like a scattered flock of sheep, battleships, cruisers, transports, and destroyers headed out for the open sea.

The impregnable ship, which had been ambling along at about ten knots, suddenly leapt forward, her ugly bow tearing through the crests of the waves, and sped in pursuit of the flying enemy at a good thirty-five.

If the Germans looked like a flock of sheep, the impregnable ship went after them like a sheepdog. Heading them off she rounded them up into a huddled, disorganised crowd.

To put a final touch to their impotence, down from the north came the British Super-Dreadnought squadrons, steaming southward at their full twenty-two knots, fearing the Humber had been seized, and ready to blow the invading fleet out of the water.

Instead, they escorted them up the estuary in a sort of triumphal procession. For when the Germans saw that resistance and flight alike were utterly useless, every red, white, and black flag came fluttering down.

The entire fleet surrendered at a blow.

V.

As the impregnable ship, the red ray no longer flickering from her casemates, the haze no longer surrounding her, led the line up the river, past the battered ships of Brabazon's fleet, the door of the conning tower opened, and a man stepped out on to the little bridge, looking eagerly around him.

"God bless my soul," cried Brabazon. "Why didn't I guess it before? It's Pennycomequick—Potiphar—what's the fellow's name? Protheroe. Protheroe with his blessed invention. And he's saved England."

The admiral was right. The German government, appalled at the loss of their entire fleet, realising acutely the fearful power of the new force Britain had in the impregnable ship, made peace instantly. It was the shortest war in modern history.

"Now tell me exactly how you did it," said the admiral, as he and Protheroe sat in a first-class compartment en route for London —Brabazon to go to the Admiralty, Protheroe for no apparent reason at all.

"It was quite easy," said Protheroe simply. "You know I've been playing about with rays and things for years. Always had a notion that they would oust explosives in time. At last I hit upon an ultra-red ray that had the extraordinary property of going straight through any kind of metal, like ordinary light through glass.

"When I came to test it, I also found that it would blow up almost any explosive known to science at a distance of 2,000 yards—whether it was cased with inches of metal or not. And this gave me the idea for building an invulnerable ship.

"I found an obselete destroyer—the *Electra*—one of the old thirty-knot class the Admiralty threw out of commission years ago. She was on the scrap-heap in a Tyneside shipbuilding yard, and I bought her for a song. I took her down to the shed I'd rigged up, and fitted her with Diesel engines that would develop thirty-five knots. I got together a few men—ex-seamen every one of them—and we rigged up casemates of bullet proof steel, and fitted in every one a generator of the ultra-red ray.

"It was touch and go. She was some way from ready, but her hull was O.K., and her engines were sound and we had the generators in, so we chanced the rest, put out to sea and ran down to the Humber, where we found you.

"You saw what happened then. The shells the Germans fired at the *Electra* never reached her—they burst the moment they touched the fringe of the ray. And when a ship came into the red haze the ray threw out—bang went her magazines and blew the bottom out of her. You noticed that with the *Potsdam* and those destroyers?"

"By Jove! yes," exclaimed the admiral. "It was the most staggering thing I ever saw. Anyway, you ought to make your fortune now, my boy. You're a popular hero already, I see, and you deserve it. What are you going to do now?"

"The Admiralty have bought up the invention and the *Electra* and the whole thing," he said.

"The deuce they have."

"Yes." Protheroe's eyes twinkled. "They

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With a dull, booming roar both magazines exploded. The *Potsdam's* decks bulged upwards, great sheets of flame and acrid smoke pouring through the rents.

held out the glad hand. Discreetly said not a word about the other affair, but tacitly admitted I was innocent by giving me a post in charge of a Navy Yard at Woolwich, with instructions to equip every ship in the Navy with the ultra-red ray as fast as it could be done—and the rank of commander."

"Bravo!" cried the admiral. "I said you'd come back to the Service, didn't I?"

He held out his hand and the young man gripped it silently.

"Bless my soul," the admiral went on, "here we are at Liverpool Street and there's Peggy on the platform!" He hastily grabbed his belongings as the girl made for the door of the compartment. "Here I am Peggy, safe and sound. And here's somebody else, all smothered with fame and laurels. Let me have the car—I've got to go to the Admiralty at once. He'll take you home in a taxi. And—Peggy!"

"Yes."

"If he wants to stop at a jeweller's on the way and buy a ring to fit you, you can let him do it."

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Picture Paragraphs

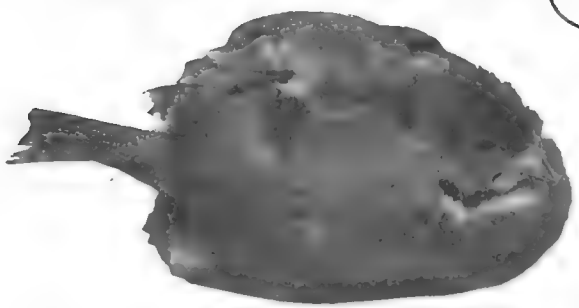

Photo *Courtesy of Popular Mechanics Magazine.*

A sparrow who, finding a bun in the garden of the White House, Washington, U.S.A., ate his way right through it before he was rescued.

The Editor will be Pleased to Purchase Photographs of an Interesting or Out of the Way Nature. All Photographs should be Accompanied by a Short Description.

TAKING THE BUN.

A SPARROW who found a bun in the grounds of the White House, Washington, U.S.A., found by the time he had eaten half-way through that it was impossible to back out, and was forced to eat his way out at the other side.

He had just succeeded in getting his head out when a policeman came to the rescue and released him from the trap.

A DOG ACTOR.

MIKE is the name of a clever smooth-haired terrier who appeared lately in a play given by the pupils of a school near Liverpool, and made his entrance walking on his hind legs, hand in hand with a little girl. Mike has learnt to open the door by standing on his hind legs and turning the handle with his front paws.

Photo *Doris Wilcox.*

Mike is a dog who shows great aptitude for the stage, and recently acted in amateur theatricals with considerable success.

A NATURAL MOUSE-TRAP.

A MOUSE who investigated a plate of oysters in the pantry of an hotel at Newcastle-on-Tyne met with an unhappy fate, for he was discovered next morning trapped by one of the oysters.

He was found quite a foot away from the plate, showing that he had not succumbed without a desperate effort to obtain release. Even the most cunning of mice might be pardoned for not recognising danger in such a harmless-looking object as an oyster, and the shock must have been great when the intruder found himself caught in so unexpected a fashion, as the result of his midnight investigations.

Photo *G. C. Urwin.*

A mouse which was found trapped by an oyster, which he had pulled right off the plate in his efforts to obtain release.

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Photos *Gebruder Starke.*

Water skates are a new invention which enable the wearer to glide along quite safely—

—and should prove exceedingly useful both for sporting and military purposes.

Water skates are extremely light, and when folded are very easy to carry.

SKATING ON WATER.

THOSE who are seeking a new sport with which to beguile the hours may find water skates of interest to them. They are exceedingly useful both for sport and for military purposes; they have the advantage of light weight and portability, and require a minimum expenditure of energy from the user.

The skates consist of cylinders of caoutchouc and a protective envelope of impregnated sailcloth, and can speedily be pumped up with compressed air.

Four movable fins are fitted to the bottom of each skate, and these open at every step, thus enabling the wearer to glide forward. A light paddle is used for steering.

The keel passing longitudinally along the underside of the skate keeps it steady, but should the skater wish to free his feet, he can do so by a single movement, so that he is not hindered from swimming should anything happen to make such a course necessary.

A TRUCK THAT CLIMBS STEPS.

PEOPLE residing in Charlooe, Michigan, were recently astonished to see a five-ton truck climbing the steps of the Courthouse. The truck went up without any difficulty, stopped, and backed down again with the utmost facility.

The car has a vertical engine placed beneath the seat and sliding-gear transmission. With 30 h.p. and a four-wheel drive, the truck travels splendidly, going through sand and mud, and up steep grades, carrying its rated load with ease. Although the performance on the Courthouse steps is spectacular, it is really no more difficult than tests carried out in cross-country drives.

The car has occasionally been driven up steep grades with twenty men on it, and has negotiated banks so steep that the men could scarcely hang on to the truck.

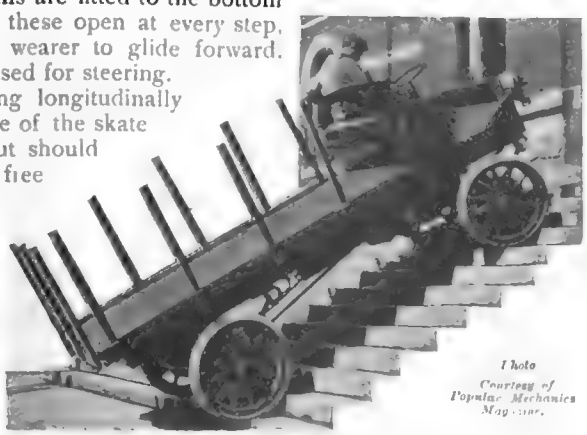

Photo Courtesy of Popular Mechanics Magazine.

A five-ton truck climbing the steps of the Courthouse at Charlooe, Michigan, a feat which it performed with ease.

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Photo *Underwood & Underwood.*

An Indian native at Benares lifting a stone weighing 960lbs.

Photo *H. M. Parish.*

A mode of travelling still in vogue in the Khâsia hills of Assam.

AN INDIAN HERCULES.

Dabee Chowdray Palwan is a "strong man," who, although he has never read a book on physical culture or been inside a gymnasium, can lift a stone weighing 960lbs., and this at the age of forty-six years. He is a vegetarian, stands about 5ft. 7½ins., and weighs less than 170lbs.

He commenced giving exhibitions as a young man, chiselling stones into symmetrical forms with cross-pieces as a hold. The 960lb. stone he tilted from its flat surface to its edge as he sat on the ground; then lying prostrate, he brought it upwards towards his chest.

When it was well over his chest the final effort was made, his veins standing out like whip-cord as the stone moved slowly upward, and then, with a tremendous muscular effort, was tossed to the earth beyond his knees.

TRAVELLING IN A BASKET.

In spite of the introduction of ponies and motor-cars the people in the Khâsia hills of Assam, India, still patronise the *tuppa*. This is a basket of bamboo cane, which is carried on the back of one of the sturdy natives, and is provided with a hood of bamboo sheaths and a small plank as foot-rest.

The Khâsias are accustomed from childhood to carry burdens resting on their backs, and supported by a strap across their foreheads, which are consequently much wrinkled. Carrying a *tuppa* is therefore not so formidable a task to them as it would be to most people.

Phot *Sport & General.*

It takes a tall man to shake hands with someone at a first-floor window, but Mr. Frederick Kempster, who stands 7ft. 9¼ins. in his socks, can do it with ease.

THE TALLEST MAN IN THE KINGDOM.

Mr. Frederick Kempster can justly claim to be one of the tallest men living, for he stands 7ft. 9¼ins. in his socks. A window 12ft. from the ground is easily within his reach, and he is tall enough to light his cigarette at a lamp-post.

His hands are big in proportion, and he can stretch two octaves on the piano with ease.

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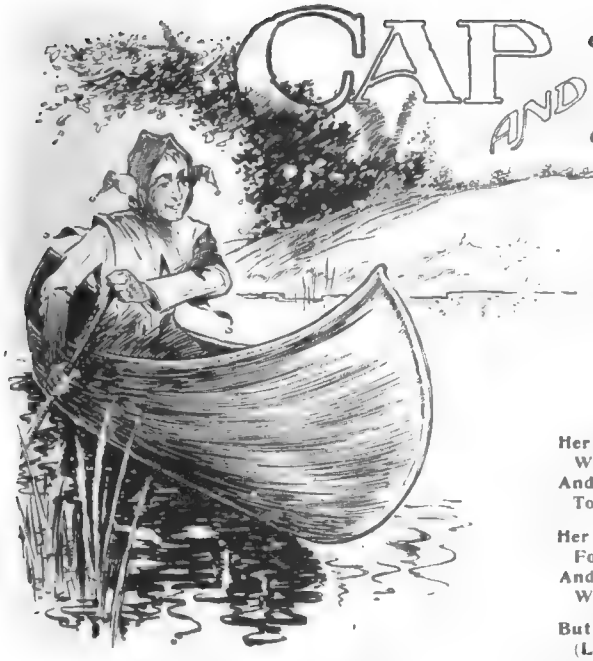

CAP AND BELLS

A CHAIR BETWEEN THEM.

MOTHER (admonishingly): "Don't let the men come too near you when courting."

DAUGHTER: "Charles and I always have a chair between us."

* * * * *

THREE GENERATIONS.

A Romance of Cheap Education

Her grandfather sailed in the F.R.A.M.
With Nansen of Polar renown,
And took an occasional D.R.A.M.
To the grief of his small native town.

Her father conducted a T.R.A.M.
For forty-nine weeks in the year,
And on Sundays he pushed out her P.R.A.M.
With mamma and the twins in the rear,

But now in the midst of a C.R.A.M.
(Like papa with his placard "Car Full")
She is studying hard for her L.R.A.M.
At the higher grade musical school!

W. S. R.

THE BELLS DECEIVED HIM.

It was a proud moment for Farmer Dale when, dressed in his Sunday best, he went to see his sailor son on board his ship at Portsmouth.

He had never been so close to a vessel before, and he marvelled at the size. Just as he caught hold of the two ropes which hung over the side to assist sailors to the deck, he was surprised to hear a clanging of bells—the eight bells of seamen's time. As he stepped on deck he met the officer of the watch. He saluted him and said timidly:

"I beg your pardon, sir. I've come to see my son Jack. But, 'pon my word, I didn't mean to ring so loud."

* * * *

HOLDING HER AUDIENCE.

DIGGS: "My wife is a wonderful vocalist. Why, I have known her to hold her audience for hours——"

BIGGS: "Nonsense!"

DIGGS: "After which she would lay it in the cradle and rock it to sleep."

* * * *

THOSE TAXIS AGAIN.

"Wasn't King John a wicked man?" said the professor's little daughter the other evening. "He used to run over people with his motor-cars."

The professor was puzzled. "Haven't you made a mistake?" he inquired doubtfully. "Surely your teacher didn't tell you that?"

"Oh, yes, she did. She told us that King John ground down the people with his taxis."

YOUNG MAN: "Could you inform me if the water supply here is all right, as I am thinking of taking a house in the neighbourhood?"

BEERY RUSTIC: "The supply's all right, but the demand ain't equal to it."

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THE WRONG KIND.

PAT: "The doctor tould me to go home and take a black draught, but, bejabers, it'll be mighty hard to swallow."

A SINISTER DISCOVERY.

"This watch will last a lifetime," remarked the jeweller, as he handed it to a customer.

"Nonsense," returned the other. "Can't I see for myself that its hours are numbered?"

* * * *

THE UNEXPECTED.

She was a pretty young school teacher, and was reading sentences to her class, letting them supply the last word.

"The sphinx," she read, "has eyes, but it cannot——"

"See," cried the children.

"Has ears, but it cannot——"

"Hear," they responded.

"Has a mouth, but it cannot——"

"Eat," came the chorus.

"Has a nose, but it cannot——"

"Wipe it," thundered the class.

The lesson ended abruptly.

* * * *

A DIRE CALAMITY.

SWEET YOUNG THING: "I had an awful disappointment to-day!"

"Freddy failed to propose?"

"No; worse than that. I saw a great bargain in shoes, and had a hole in one of my stockings!"

AN IMPOSSIBLE FEAT.

"Your friend the professor may have a remarkable talent for language, but there is one tongue he will never master."

"What tongue is that?"

"His wife's."

* * * *

A LETTER.

Tickets for the theatre, two,
Sent, as I can plainly see,
One for me and one for you.

What a welcome *billet doux!*
Postman seldom brings to me
Tickets for the theatre too.

I declare I'm in a stew.
Just two little cups of tea,
One for me and one for you.

Dine before? Of course we do,
Fancy, what a jolly spree!
Tickets for the theatre too!

If we go in cream or blue,
Claude and Fred will surely be
Won for me and won for you.

We shall have a splendid view,
And the play's a comedy;
Tickets for the theatre, two,
One for me and one for you.

E. P. Allnutt.

* * * *

ARRESTING TIME.

"Even a policeman can't arrest the flight of time," said the funny man.

"Oh, I don't know," rejoined the matter-of-fact person. "Only this morning I saw a policeman enter a side door and stop a few minutes."

CRICKET NEWS—LUNCH SCORES.

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A WEIGHTY MATTER.

GROCER: "What was that woman complaining about?"

ASSISTANT: "The long wait, sir."

GROCER: "And only yesterday she was kicking about the short weight. You can't please some people."

* * * * *

UNAPPRECIATIVE.

"Fine old inn, sir," commented the host; "everything in this house has its story."

"I don't doubt it," remarked the grumpy tourist. "And is there any legend connected with this old piece of cheese?"

* * * * *

DISAPPOINTING!

"Papa," queried little Molly, who was examining a piece of silver ore, "how do they get the silver out of this rock?"

"They smelt it, dear," was the reply.

"Well, I don't understand it at all," said Molly a moment later. "I smelt it, too, but none of the silver came out."

* *

QUITE INEVITABLE.

"Mother," said Mabel, "do missionaries go to heaven?"

"Why, of course, dear," her mother replied.

"Do cannibals?"

"No, I am afraid they don't."

"But, mother," the little girl insisted, "if a cannibal eats a missionary, he'll have to go, won't he?"

* *

SO SAD!

"'Twas a pathetic scene," remarked the leading actor *à propos* of a certain "farewell performance."

"Yes," replied the low comedian, "even the boxes rose in tiers."

* * * * *

BURIED FAILURES.

FACETIOUS DOCTOR (to artist): "The pictures on the walls are your failures, I suppose?"

DYSPEPTIC ARTIST: "Yes. That's where you doctors have the pull over us. You can bury yours."

* * * * *

FRANKLY PUZZLED.

WIFE OF ABSENT-MINDED PROFESSOR: "Do you know, darling, you haven't kissed me for a fortnight?"

ABSENT-MINDED PROFESSOR: "Great Zeus! Whom have I been kissing, then?"

THE SOLE SURVIVORS.

A well-known judge had a notorious scoundrel brought before him. In the course of his examination his honour asked:

"What has become of your associates in your early life of crime?"

"They're all hanged," returned the prisoner, "except your honour and myself."

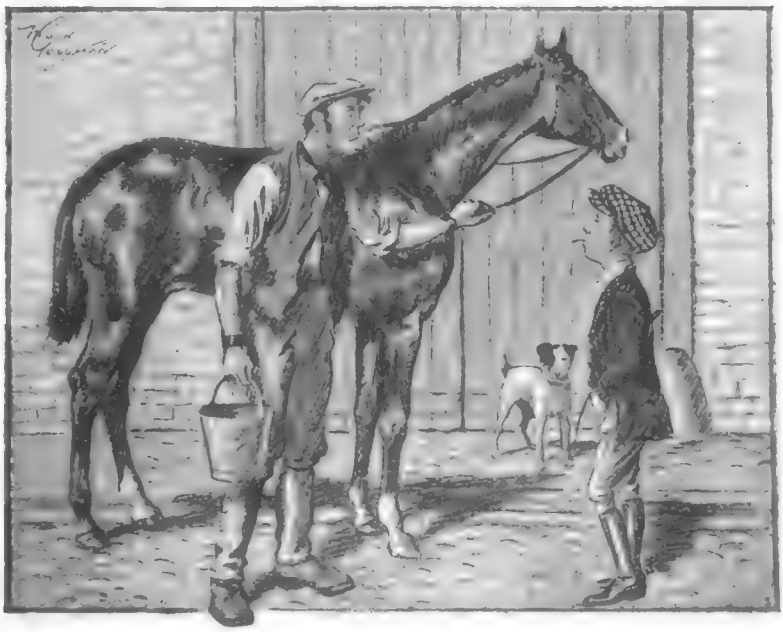
* * * * *

THE SCHOOLBOY'S LAMENT.

Put on the thumbscrew, give me the rope,
But I ask you, Mother,
Don't make me use soap;

You don't understand, or else you won't;
You see, I *can't* use it—
The other chaps don't.

Eleanor Ward.



IRISH GROOM TO NEW APPRENTICE: "Now, mind, if you ever walk past a horse at close quarters, go ayther in front of him or be'ind 'im. Fur if you go in front of 'im he can't kick you, and if you go be'ind 'im he can't bite you."

NOT A DOORKEEPER.

A party was surveying on a farm in the Far West of Canada when an old man came hurrying out of his house and asked:

"What you doin' here?"

"Surveying," was the reply of one of the engineers.

"Surveyin' for what?"

"For a railroad."

"Where's it goin'?"

"Right through your barn, I guess," laughed the engineer.

"Well, now, mister, I reckon I've got somethin' to say to that. I want you to understand that I've got somethin' else to do besides runnin' out to open and shut them barn doors every time a train wants to go through."

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MUTUAL FORGETFULNESS.

"Dear Clara," wrote the young man, "pardon me, but I'm getting so forgetful. I proposed to you last night, but really forget whether you said yes or no."

"Dear Will," she replied by note, "so glad to hear from you. I know I said yes to someone last night, but I had forgotten just who it was."

The grey mouse comes a-wooing with a long tale of devotion——

* * * * *

STRETCHING OR SHUFFLING?

The wife of a certain doctor had advertised for a girl to do the housework, and was showing an applicant over the house. She had been very liberal in her promises of privileges, and it looked as though the two were about to come to an agreement, when the girl suddenly asked:

"Do you do your own stretchin'?"

"Do we do our own what?" asked the puzzled mistress.

"Stretchin'," repeated the girl solemnly. "Do you put all the food on the table at dinner and stretch for it, or do I have to shuffle it around?"

——and the white mouse answers him with another long tail.

* *

RATHER A HINDRANCE.

A wag the other day denied that Bunyan was the author of "Pilgrim's Progress." Being contradicted, he continued:

"I question if he even contributed to the work; for it is impossible that a bunion could contribute to any pilgrim's progress."

PALMS IN ABUNDANCE.

FIRST GUEST: "I'm sure I don't know why they call this hotel 'The Palms.' Do you? I've never seen a palm anywhere near the place."

SECOND GUEST: "You'll see them before you go. It's a pleasant little surprise the waiters keep for the guests till the last day of their stay."

* * * * *

WANTED—A NEW COMPLAINT.

A physician who was much in demand among members of the smart set was called to attend a society woman.

"Good morning, Mrs. Carney," he said in his breezy manner, "here I am. What do you think is the matter with you this morning?"

"Oh, doctor," she said in a plaintive voice, "I hardly know what to say. What is new?"

* *

A WELCOME SUGGESTION.

He was not a very rapid wooer, and she was getting a bit anxious. A persistent ring came at the front door.

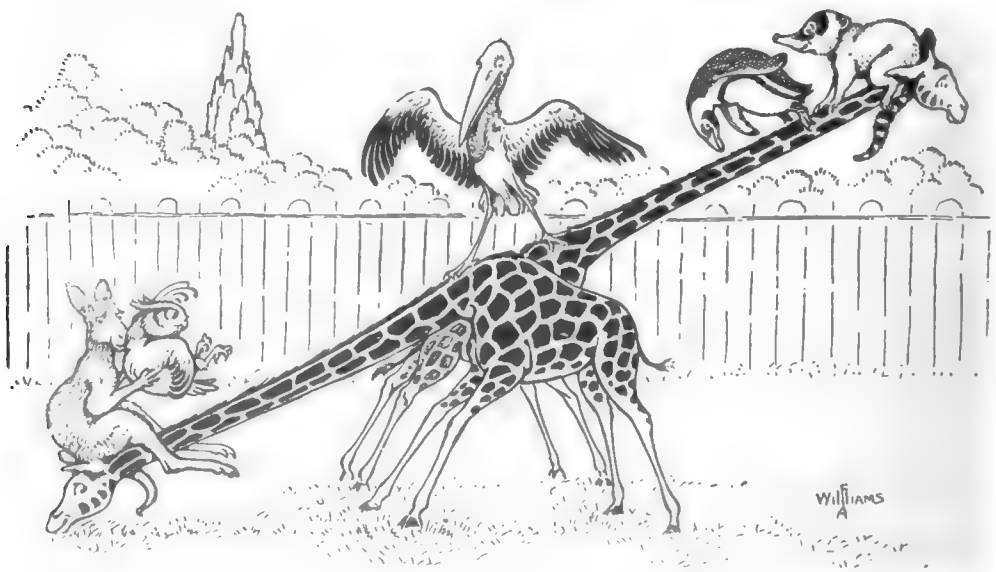
"Oh, bother!" she said. "Who can be calling?"

"Say you're out," he suggested.

"That would be untrue," she protested.

"Then say you are engaged," he urged.

"Oh, may I, Charlie?" she cried, as she fell into his arms.



"The See-Saw Giraffes," or "The Ups and Downs of Zoo Life."

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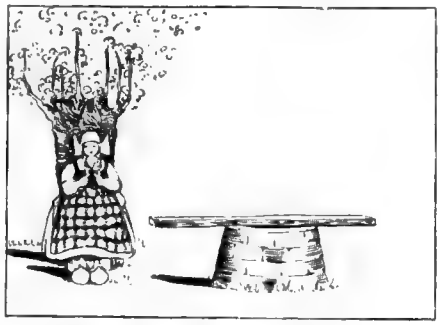
ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE AND WAR

I.



Fair Gretchen knits demurely by the old and disused well,

II.

When Hans appears to hold her wool and bask beneath her spell.

LEAVING IT TO HIM.

The wealthy old lady was very ill and sent for her lawyer to make her will.

"I wish to consult you," she said weakly, "about disposing of my property."

The lawyer was sympathetic. "There, there," he said, "don't worry about it; just leave it all to me."

"Oh, well," said the old lady resignedly, "I suppose I might as well. You'll get it anyway."

* *

WELL MATCHED.

HE: "Smith and his wife are well matched."

SHE: "How?"

HE: "Whenever he starts to smoke she starts to fume."

* *

REALISM.

NEIGHBOUR: "Well, Silas, did you see the St. Gothard Pass when you were in Switzerland last summer?"

SILAS: "No, sir; I sat at my hotel window two whole days and a night to see it pass, and the wretched mountain never moved an inch."

III.

Then Jan espies them sitting there; he shakes his fist in hate,
And vows that Hans shall shortly meet a cruel and watery fate.

A STIRRING AFFAIR.

The young wife came hurriedly into her husband's study one morning.

"Herbert dear," she said, "this recipe for custard tells you to stand on a hot stove and stir constantly."

"Well, Alice," replied the mere male, "if you do stand on a hot stove, I think you will find that you will stir constantly."

* *

LIVE AND LEARN.

SEA CAPTAIN: "Waiter, what do you call this?"

WAITER: "Soup, sir."

SEA CAPTAIN: "Well, well, I must have sailed on soup all my life and didn't know it."

* *

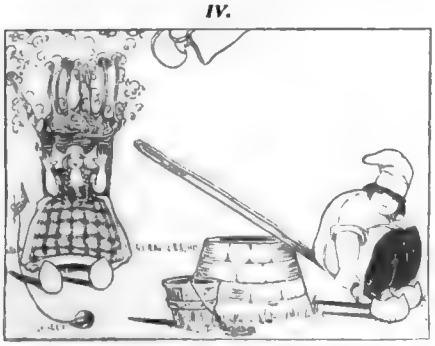
STILL UNCUT.

A witty priest was once visiting a self-made millionaire who took him to see his seldom used library.

"There," said the millionaire, pointing to a table covered with books, "there are my best friends."

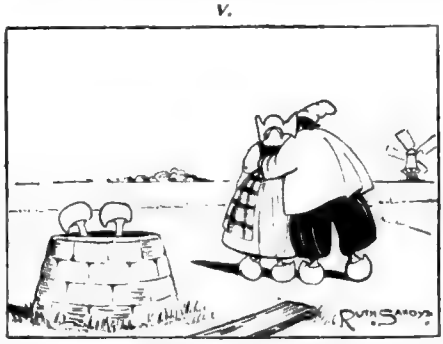
"Ah," replied the visitor as he glanced at the leaves, "I'm glad you don't 'cut' them."

IV.



Poor Hans is hurled from off the plank; fair Gretchen screams with fear,

V.



But shortly wanders off with Jan, without a single tear.

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The GULF STREAM

By CONINGSBY DAWSON.

This is, in its way, a remarkable story. It is a wonderful and understanding study of two young married people who got on one another's nerves and parted, for the lack of a little comradeship and sympathy. All married people, and people about to be married, ought to read "The Gulf Stream," because what happened to April and Curly might so easily happen to them.

I.

SHE called him Curly because he had wavy hair; he called her April because her face could be so young when it was free from moods and shadows. The moods and shadows came when she spoke of her career. She possessed a temperament, and wanted to be an actress; otherwise she gave no sure sign of theatric talent. She could mimic well; when she did that, Curly had to applaud despite himself. She was a darling, who intrigued and delighted him by her wilful cleverness.

And, in a way, Curly sympathised. He, too, was ambitious. He was only a London journalist, but he knew that he was going to be a very great man. How did he know? He had no surer proof than she had that she would succeed as an actress. He simply felt it.

It happened in the hired privacy of a taxi, where so many love-affairs of rushing cities reach their climax. Seated a little apart in silence, they were returning from a theatre along the Embankment. As they followed the swollen gleaming of the river, the London street-lamps illumined and the intervals of darkness blotted out the pathos of her face turned from him and the insistent appeal of her lonely, ungloved hand. He covered it with his own; felt its pressure; kissed her unsteadily on the mouth; drew her unresisting to him, and felt immensely glad.

After they were married time became an overwhelming consideration. As a bachelor he had been accustomed to earn a living by day in Fleet Street and to devote all his holidays, Sundays, and evenings to the intoxicating race for success. He was keen to be a playwright. Quaintly enough it was this community of interest in the stage that had first brought him and April together. Up to now all his plays had been rejected. But to young men that always happens.

This matter of time worried him. He couldn't expect that April would allow him to spend all his leisure on ambitions, especially since so far they had led him nowhere; but, if he slacked away all his spare hours, he would remain stuck fast in his obscure rut, the same as any smaller man. He would have preferred to have hired a cottage in the country within easy reach of London; to save an hour in travelling to and from his newspaper he had to be content with a flat in Highbrow Mansions.

The Mansions stood in a lean, unlovely row, facing Battersea Park; the flats were piled high, one on top of the other, ignominiously to the sky-line, like neat domestic coffins.

That he might endow his particular flat with the lacking personality, Curly nicknamed it *All's-Well*—the name he would have painted on the gate of his cottage. Did he do it in a spirit of desperate optimism or of dogmatic prophecy?

At first all *was* well. April charmed him by her childlike eagerness to be part of his essential self. There was a sweet rivalry

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between them as to who should exceed the other in self-effacement. She was like a beautiful flower swaying through the house, a slim narcissus, with her pale and wistful expression, grey eyes, pencilled brows and hair like a blue-black cloud trailing across the whiteness of her forehead.

She showed her worship by the pride with which she pronounced the magic words "My husband," when trying to impress the charwoman (who slept out) with the importance of his activities. She discussed the plots of his plays with him, was anxious to hear how they developed, and even permitted him to overstep the limit of midnight to finish a masterly act when the situation had become most tense. He loved to surprise her in the evenings, sitting with her feet curled under her, absorbed in what he had last written.

Dearest of all were the notes she pinned to the door when he had been forced to stay out very late on some special assignment. At three or four in the morning, as his key grated in the latch, he would listen; sometimes he would hear her jump out of bed and she would throw her arms about him; sometimes her eyes were fast shut, and then there were the notes for a welcome. Her love for him would have been ridiculous if it had not been so tender. Often he would eye himself contemptuously in the mirror, marvelling that he should have called forth such affection. All this was at first. Things ought to have gone on that way for ever, but——

They had been man and wife for two years. Outside in the Park leaves were bursting. A green mist hung over the soot of London. The world had thrown off its lethargy and, with strange bubbling expectancy, had begun to hope afresh. Dusk was falling. Lovers dawdled on park benches, timidly touching hands, waiting for night to make them bold and anonymous.

In *All's-Well*, four flights up to heaven, a fire was burning on the hearth. Windows were open and curtains fluttered. The greyness of twilight filled the room; the fragrance of May-blossom was in the air. Nothing was heard save the occasional falling of a coal in the grate and the industrious scratching of a pen. Curly sat with his hair straggling across his temples and his shoulders crouched above a desk. The lamp was lit and spilt a halo round his head. One of his quick-thinking moods was on him. He could not get his words down on paper fast enough. Surely at last he had overtaken fame—fame, which was so swift-footed in eluding him! He was too busy to take notice of anyone.

April sat before the fire, her knees drawn up, her piquant face supported in her hands. Her eyes were vague; her listless fingers twisted the soft hair which fell across her cheeks from behind her ears and neck. Now and then, Curly paused to light his pipe and glanced across his shoulder at her. She pretended not to be aware of his attention. Then, because she had pretended not to be aware, his pen renewed its scratching.

She rose nervously and tiptoed about the room, lifting things up and setting them down in their old places, without purpose. Her movements irritated her husband; his pen ceased scratching. She went and stood behind him. He let a moment elapse, then twirled round in his chair, trying to appear unannoyed and cheerful.

"What is it, little girl?" he said.

He attempted to slip his arm about her, but she drew back.

"Haven't you finished?" She spoke poutingly, like a disappointed child who will cry presently.

He answered her in a matter of fact tone because she had thwarted his attempt to embrace her. She had got into the habit of doing that lately—of making her graciousness proportionate to his gratifying of her desires. He disliked her attitude of bartering kindness for kindness, so he answered her brusquely:

"Sorry. I'm not done, and shan't be done before midnight, if then. I'm full of it. I believe this time I've got there."

His artist's enthusiasm forced from him a note of happiness.

"By Jingo, this'll make those fellows sit up!" He peered into April's face for encouragement. "I say, little sweetheart, aren't you glad?"

She looked away from him sadly.

"Glad! I don't know." She gave her shoulders a tiny shrug. "I've heard you say that so many times. And the days go by and by, and slip into weeks and months and years. We put off all our pleasures for this success of yours, which is, maybe, coming. And you sit there writing, and I sit here with my useless hands."

He seized her hands in his own and carried them to his mouth.

"But they're not useless. They're helping me, April."

Her nose wrinkled. "Oh yes." And then: "Won't you take me out?"

He dropped her hands. There were times when he felt that he had lost her. From somewhere—when did it commence?

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His pen ceased scratching. She went and stood behind him. . . . "What is it, little girl?" he said.
(*Page 259, col. 2.*)

—a spirit of antagonism, almost of jealousy, had sprung up. It locked all doors to her personality; strive to open them as he would, he could not get to her. A petulance—he didn't like to call it hardness—had developed in her character, which was the result of a baffled longing.

He took up his pen and stabbed at the blotting pad. Quite evidently, he resented her distressing interruption, and was keen to get on with his work.

"April, you know very well that I can't take you out. I've so little time for the things that really count—but, look here, darling, when I've really got there I'll make all this up to you. I'm beastly sorry. It's hard luck for the present. But——"

The scratching of his pen recommenced.

She leant out of the window, looking down on the little fixed moons which were arc-lamps; they stood anchored in the night, solemn and regular. How interminably they stretched! How motionless! Like her own life, they shone always on the same restricted patch of ground.

The thought filled her with dreariness. She raised her eyes to the real moon, rioting through clouds; every hour it looked on new lands, marching round and round the world. That was what her life should be like. That was how she had planned it until she had met Curly.

Why should he make her wait for him? It wasn't fair. She was young. Life was calling; bursting leaves, tulips smiling up, birds coming back—everything spoke to her of adventure, stirring her old impulse. Why should Curly have his chance and refuse her hers? Why——? She turned.

"Curly, I must——"

He motioned with his hand for silence. "Let me finish this sentence."

The absorbed inconsiderateness of the gesture—the commanding air of a man engrossed by his ideas—made her stiffen. From the first, she told herself, it had always been like that—she had only come to see it in the last year—thoughts were more valuable to him than people, ideas than herself.

"Well," he questioned, speaking like a

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man who holds his watch in his hand, "what is it this time that you must say to me?"

She drew herself up proudly.

"Nothing much."

"Then, my dear child, why did you break in on me?"

He never called her "my dear child" unless he was holding her at arm's length. The smoke of misgiving cleared from her anger; she became flamingly intense.

"Because to speak to you at all nowadays I always have to break in on you. You go to the office, and I'm left alone. You come back, and at once commence writing; then I'm lonelier than ever. I see nothing of you—the real you. We might just as well not be married; and I almost wish——"

He pushed back his chair and peered across the dusk of the room.

"What's that? You almost wish we weren't? You didn't say——"

"I did." Her voice was small and hard. "I said I almost wished we weren't married, and now I know that I wish we weren't. We're not the kind of people to be married."

He laughed out of sheer surprise and nervousness.

"You're odd to-night, April!"

It was a man's retort—the very last thing he should have said. He resumed his pen, making a pretence to go on with his task.

The small, penetrating voice pursued him.

"You don't think me very important, do you—not half so important as your plays, though they never get accepted. I made a mistake when I gave up everything for you. I might have been a great actress now."

Curly sat round and faced her.

"D'you know, April, I'm getting rather tired of this rubbish about what you gave up. You've talked of it too often lately. You gave up no more than any other woman who takes a man for her husband. You gave up nothing—you were never on the stage. And then you say that you might have been a great actress! You might have been an actress—but why great? You always suppose that you'd have been a second Bernhardt.

"You use this something, which you never had, as a stick to beat me with directly things don't please you. Be sensible. I've done my best. If you'd ever gone on the stage, you'd probably have been barn-storming in small parts at this moment. If marriage hasn't turned out to be so ideal as we both hoped, let's be grateful for what we have."

He sorted his papers as though the argument were ended. She had listened to him with cold resentment. She waited till he had nearly concentrated his scattered thoughts; then she spoke.

"You don't understand—you don't want to understand."

"There's nothing to understand, except that you've been a little cross and have made me lose my temper."

"It isn't too late yet."

He ran his fingers through his hair. "Good Heavens! I wish you'd be quiet."

She persisted. "It isn't too late yet for me to go on the stage. I had a part offered me to-day in a company going to America."

Her information had the desired effect. He unbent his shoulders and eyed her slowly. He was beginning to be afraid and would not own it, even to himself. "An offer!" he echoed. "What's the good of that? You're married."

"Yes, but actresses are often married."

Wearily he laid down his pen.

"That's neither here nor there. You're my wife, and I'm not going to share you. If I had to think of you going through love-scenes with other men, I should go mad. I couldn't bear it.

"I've said this to you so often. I'm not jealous—it isn't that. But I know the world, and the indecency of the world; I want to keep you just as you are—ignorant of ugliness. I want to do everything for you, and to be everything to you. Won't you be content with that?"

She was touched; her voice faltered.

"You're dear and chivalrous. You don't want me to get anything for myself. You'd keep me a baby-woman, if you could, always. But can't you understand that I'm just like you? I want to be someone in the world.

"At first I thought that love was enough, but——. It would have been, if it had been enough for you as well. But power's more to you than love, and you always have to be working to earn it. I don't blame you one little bit, Curly. But spring's out there, and the river, and live people, and I sit in here shut off from everything, watching you as though you were a dead person whose hand keeps moving."

He rested his head between his hands, not looking at her. There was something that had to be said—something that, if said clumsily, would sound cruel.

"April, I want to tell you that I've only one thought in everything I do—to make you happy. I want to have power, fame, success—whatever you choose to call it—only so as to be able to do things for you.

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"You've got into my blood—if you hadn't, I wouldn't have been such a fool as to marry you when I knew you weren't ready. I ought to have waited till I had starved you out of every other desire in the world except that I should love you. That's the way I've always felt about you. Why, it's you I write about, dream about, think about every second. I can't help it if I have to put my heart down on paper. I'm made like that."

He rose to his feet, trying an old strategy. Crossing the room he took her by the shoulders, peering down into her face, stooping his lips nearer. "Little stupid, why d'you make me quarrel with you? Come, be your own sweet self."

She didn't tiptoe against him and kiss him. That means of settling their differences always left him master and her a naughty child, generously forgiven.

She stroked back the hair from his temples.

"Poor Curly, I'm no longer a little girl to be housed, and fed, and petted. I've got brains and ambitions—you won't acknowledge that. Oh, please don't believe that I don't love you. I do—I think more than ever.

"But my life's so stuffy—so objectless. I get so lonely while you put your heart down on paper. You say you're made like that—have always to be writing. And I—I'm made the way I am. Neither of us can help it. We love one another, and we've made a mess of our love. I want to live through myself. I've got this offer—and I'm going to take it."

"You're not!" he clutched her to him.

Feeling his pain, she kissed him. He thought he had conquered.

"But, dearest, I am," she said.

His arms slid down her—fell away from her. "You're going to leave me?" he asked dully.

"I'm going to leave you."

"But if you succeed?" He had never admitted before that success was possible.

She threw her arms about him; it was he who failed to respond to her affection now. "If I succeed—— I don't know," she said. She felt that she would soon be sobbing and hurried from the room. He heard the door of their bedroom close—the door on which those love-notes had been pinned for a welcome.

From habit he sat himself down at his desk. She'd said that his ideas were more important than people. By gad, he'd prove it!

But he couldn't. Always he could see her slender figure, like a tall spring flower; and her drooping face, so wistful in expression; and her grey eyes; and her hair, like smoke against the whiteness of her forehead; and her eager, clinging hands.

He tore to shreds the pages he had written. He must get out. In the hall he listened. She didn't come to him.

Dawn was trembling in the tree-tops when he climbed the four flights to *All's-Well*. He inserted his key stealthily, as though he had no right to enter there. Closing the door, he listened. Nothing stirred. Morning found him stretched out on the couch fully dressed.

In those final days they made a brave pretence at being unemotional and good comrades. So they came to their last meal together. She would not let him see her away—to say good-bye in the house would seem more temporary. Would she write? Of course she would; it was the fourth time he'd asked her. She told him where he would find everything—she had repaired all his socks and linen. He must be careful of himself and not sit up too late.

"So you're going?"

She nodded with an attempt at brightness. She stooped her face, fumbling with the buttoning of her gloves so as not to look at him.

"Let me do that."

He took the small wrist in his hands.

"So you're going?" he asked again. "Well, here's luck and don't forget to come back."

She lifted her mouth to his. "Dear old boy, I won't forget."

When he had watched her vanish down the stone-stairway, he ran back into the flat and leant out of the window to get one last glimpse of her.

Would she never appear? Ah! The trim little figure, so self-reliant and so defenceless, tripped across the pavement to the waiting taxi. A boy stopped bowling his hoop to stare at her. She said something; the boy laughed merrily. The engine commenced to pant. Only when she was moving did she lift her eyes to *All's-Well* and wave her hand.

II.

The theatre was packed. It was the usual New York first night audience. Critics, in the front rows of the orchestra, drew attention to themselves by their attempts to be recognised. They were confiding to each other, and to whoever cared to hear and be

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impressed, all their inside knowledge of the evening's performance.

"By a newcomer. Had a dozen, more or less, turned down, so they say, before this one was accepted. Doesn't write under his own name—forget what he's called for the moment. They've gone clean crazy about him in London. Queer title he gave his play, *The Gulf Stream*. Sounds like 'Mid-Channel!' A copy, no doubt."

No doubt, thought Curly; it was no more than that—only one life's bitterness churned up to provide an entertainment. And then, he asked himself again, what right had he to publish a sorrow that he had shared with a woman?

But this was an older and more cynical Curly than the broad-shouldered boy who, five years earlier, had leant out of *All's-Well* to watch April drive away. Time, treading close in Memory's footsteps, had obliterated nothing—had only trodden deeper the footprints of tragedy.

He tossed his head. A sorrow which he had shared with a woman! But was the sorrow shared? Her letters had grown fewer and less intimate as she had succeeded, until now——

Perhaps it was his fault—he had had nothing to write about but his failure, always his failure—nothing until, with the unscrupulous writer's knack, he had set down the truth about her and himself.

Because of his *nom-de-guerre*, she might never know that he had at last won fame. No achieved ambition was complete that he could not give to her as a present. His good fortune was bitter as ashes on his palate—doubly bitter when he pictured how she would scorn him, were she to hear that he had coined luck out of something that was also hers, and sacred.

Lights were lowered. Men slipped into their places. The curtain rose slowly. Five years of disillusion and loneliness drifted out of his consciousness. It was the kindlier past that lay behind all that, with its sweet and yearning poignancy, that he witnessed. He saw himself and her in charitable perspective, with that rare unjudging compassion for frailty which comes in exalted moments.

He saw himself and April in those tremulous young days at *All's-Well!* How truly he had caught the atmosphere—the wistful, shy passion, the fluttering sense of a love too big to be expressed!

No, he had not spared himself. With cruel self-analysis he had pictured all his compulsory neglect of her. That was the pity of it—his neglect was compulsory. Even now, he couldn't see how he could have acted otherwise. To a woman a man gives only part of himself—the world claims the rest; to a man a woman gives her soul and body—everything that is hers.

But he had taken her sacrifice too much for granted—he had expected too masterfully that she should come into the gulf-stream of his life, leaving her own currents untravelled, finding him sufficient compensation.

The first act ended suddenly. The curtain fell. The buzz of conversation recommenced. The theatre was flooded with a wounding glare. His eyes were wet. Funny to be crying at his own invention! Men brushed past him with a muttered apology, hurrying out to smoke a cigarette. Those who were with ladies, fidgeted in their seats, discussing the merits and demerits of the playwright.

The bell rang. The crowd returned. Lights were just about to go out when he raised his eyes. He had the disquieting sensation that someone was staring at him. In the second tier of boxes to the right, he caught a woman's profile. Just as he saw her, she drew back, a shadow against the background.

His eyes probed the darkness with painful inquiry. Was he self-deceived by his desire?

He took in nothing of what was happening on the stage. He watched the box to the right, feeling instinctively that at times his gaze was returned. When the lights flickered up for the second interval, he rose in his seat—she was not there.

In the *foyer* men stood in groups talking. He listened; it seemed to him that they were discussing him and her—not the fictitious characters he had created. Anger blinded him to proportion. What right had they—? He passed out.

Broadway streamed by him, pursuing, flashing, incandescent. He looked back at the theatre, with its blazing electric-sign, declaring broadcast the vulgarity of his confession. His pain called for self-torture; he was drawn back to look at it.

The third act was in progress. It filled him with self-contempt. Poor fool that he had been! He had pawned love to buy notoriety. All she had wanted was a little tenderness. He longed to shout to that intellectual miser behind the footlights to dash the pen from his hand and throw his arms about her before she should go from him. Impotent as fate to delay events, he watched himself.

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He had not returned to his seat, but stood at the back of the theatre ready to escape, morbidly afraid of being recognised. His eyes wandered to the box on the right. She was there.

Surely there was no mistake. Even if he had not seen her face, he would have known her hands anywhere—hands so small and clinging and childish. But he saw it, bent far out above the rail, gazing down at his vacant place. She was weeping—he knew it.

He waited for the end, waited ravenously, that he might see her plainly. But as the clapping commenced and the curtain began to fall, shame drove him out. The clapping was like blows rained upon him. Beyond recall, his own proclaimed opinion of himself was driving her out of the gulf-stream of his life. And this was fame without her!

His instinct was to hide, but his courtesy—or was it his egotism still eager to be applauded?—led him round to the stage-door.

As a man of the world, Curly masked his face and smiled. The star in her dressing-room, knee-deep in flowers, thanked him for her splendid lines; then he thanked her for the way they had been rendered. Insincerity! He felt old and tired.

He sat down, bending forward, pressing his forehead.

Stage-hands were dismantling the illusion, revealing it as faked and tawdry—mere painted canvas, with windows that looked out on boards, instead of tree-tops where spring was bubbling and birds were building nests. He watched them gloomily. Yes, the reality had had to die before he could appreciate its beauty. Only when it was too late——

A man touched him

"What is it?"

"A lady."

"Tell her I can't——"

"But she said——"

"Then tell her to-morrow at my hotel."

"To-morrow won't do, Curly."

That voice! It shook him. It was like a flute played faintly, luring him. How often he had heard it in memory and followed! How often he had tried to recollect it, and had feared that he would never again recall it! He attempted to rise; he was cold and dizzy—sick with too much longing. He turned and opened his eyes.

At first he saw nothing but the drop-scenes, hanging like huge bats above him. Lights were being quenched. Stage-hands, slipping into their coats, paused to stare curiously before they hurried away. Then he saw her—a woman, swaying, tall and straight, like a white narcissus, in the shadows.

"To-morrow won't do, Curly," she said. "With us it was always going to be to morrow. It never came. I want to-day."

Her voice broke. She knelt beside him, so closely that her hair brushed his face. He tried to answer her. He couldn't. His throat was full of tears. He was dazed. Always in the great moments of his life he had been silent—had found nothing to say.

She mistook his silence. Shrinking back from him, she covered her face.

"Oh, I've been foolish. I never guessed until to-night. Why didn't I know? Why didn't I know? Why didn't you tell me?"

He touched her on the shoulder awkwardly, with that old sweet shame of showing tenderness. "Tell you?" he whispered hoarsely. "What was it I didn't tell you?"

She seized his hand, pressing it to her lips. "How you loved me. You told me and everyone to-night—— Because you were silent I've wasted a whole five years of life."

"Wasted! But—but you've done what you set out to do."

She shook her head. "No, what I set out to do. I set out to win fame, and I've found that it's nothing—I've lost you."

She raised her eyes to his pleadingly, anxious for denial.

He didn't speak for a moment. Instead, he took her palm in his own, spreading out the fingers wonderingly, just as he used to do. He spoke huskily. "Why—why did I lose you? I mean, why didn't we write?"

"Pride," she said; "because we were both ashamed. Success was so long in coming; until it came to both of us, neither of us could be the other's equal and begin afresh."

"And now?"

She drew his head to her bosom. "I don't have to be your equal any longer," she whispered, "not in that way. I don't want to succeed in anything except—only in making you love me. I'm going to leave the stage—we'll have children. You were right, darling—a woman has to come into the gulf-stream of her man's life, or else—or else stop outside."

He slipped his arm about her and caught her to him, kissing her on the mouth.

"And we've lost five years of this," she whispered.

"And of this!"

Again he bent over her.

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He turned and opened his eyes. At first he saw nothing. . . . Then he saw her—a woman, swaying, tall and straight, like a white narcissus, in the shadows.

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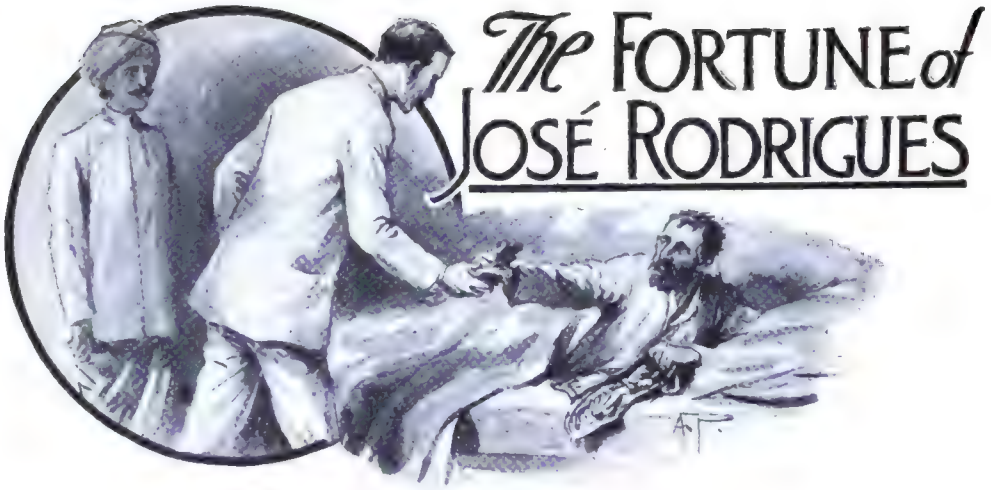

The Fortune of José Rodrigues

A Story of Buried Treasure.

By Gladys L. Gunn.

I.

He drifted in quite early, one hot morning, through the tall, whitewashed gates into the parched dusty compound, and wended his way slowly, hesitatingly, up to the low thatched bungalow at the far end.

He announced in a thin, reedy voice, when he arrived under the porch, that his name was José Emmanuel Rodrigues, and that, but for the squandering disposition of his celebrated ancestor, the great Don José Rodrigues of Spain, he would now be driving about in the finest carriage and pair to be seen in the whole station.

All of which surprising statements Mr. Algernon Tollemache, senior subaltern of the Nutcut Lancers, received without the slightest tremor of either pleasure or interest, as he sat in his verandah sipping his morning tea, clad in the pleasing simplicity of pale pink silk pyjamas and bath slippers. Indeed, he never so much as lifted his eyes to see who the newcomer might be.

The descendant of the great Don José still stood in the porch outside, a pitiable enough figure, for his dirty blue and white checked cotton suit hung in limp folds upon his tall, emaciated form, while a tuft of rough grizzled hair stuck out, mockingly, ironically, from a large rent in the crown of his battered straw hat.

In his hand he carried an untidy bundle tied up in an old bandana handkerchief.

"Sir," he began again, after a pause, with a deeply apologetic cough, "if your honour could see your way to giving me a little assistance—I have had plenty fever lately, and now veree weak!"

"Oh, get away! Go to the servants' quarters at the back of the house! These everlasting beggars are becoming a positive nuisance," muttered young Tollemache irritably, turning his back on the old half-caste.

"Sir! . . . Just a little food——"

"Oh, go to blazes!" shouted the subaltern at last, jumping up and making a threatening dash in the direction of the porch. And then it was that the affair took a totally unexpected turn, for instead of taking his departure hurriedly, like most of his kind, Mr. Rodrigues quite suddenly and quietly collapsed, with a gasping sigh, on the dusty ground at Tollemache's feet!

"Why—I'm dashed if the old beggar hasn't fainted!" gasped the astonished youth. "I believe he must have been telling the truth for once, and *was* actually starving!"

For two days the old man lay in blissful peace, in a stuffy little room, fed and tended by Tollemache's servants. But towards the end of the third day, just as the sun was setting in a blaze of copper and crimson, one of the servants came running in to say the old Eurasian was dying, and was calling for the sahib with great loudness. So Algernon, dropping a polo stick he was mending, hurried over to the servants' quarters.

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Stooping in the narrow doorway, he quietly entered the hut.

The sick man raised himself with an effort, and beckoned to him with a shaking hand.

"Your honour," he whispered, as the subaltern bent over the low bed, "I am dying. My strength is going—lately taking plenty native spirits and opium in bazaar to drown troubles of losing all money. Now sickness coming plenty bad. This time to-morrow I shall be dead, I think."

He lay back, choking for breath, but, pulling himself together with a fierce effort, he went on:

"I wish now to give you only valuable thing I got left for your honour's kindness to me, a sick man. It is one old piece of writing, telling where secret place is of plenty treasure—gems and much gold—all lying hidden in the mountains. Celebrated ancestor, Don José, was one great friend of Tippoo Rajah, and so getting much riches in old days. I only finding the paper two months ago . . . and where I getting the money to travel up to the hills?"

With great difficulty he dragged forth the bandana handkerchief from under his pillow, and, untying a multitude of knots, produced an old crumpled piece of yellow parchment, thickly covered with writing, which he thrust into Tollemache's hand. A sudden look of hungry greed flashed over the Eurasian's face for an instant.

"*Aie, yo!*" he wailed . . . "and now I die—I die—and never so much as getting one *pice* (about a halfpenny) of all my wealth after all!"

II.

A few days later, as Algy sat smoking on the terrace of the club, and glancing idly through the newly arrived English papers, a tall, sunburnt man strolled along, and, pulling up a long cane chair, sat down beside him.

"Hullo!" cried Tollemache looking up. "Why, you're the very chap I want; I didn't know you were back!"

Brendon, the newspaper man, smiled and lit a cigarette.

"I went down to Calcutta to see about some curious old manuscripts that were being disposed of, by a bankrupt Rajah, the other day. As you know, I'm rather keen on ancient scripts."

Algy fumbled in his pocket, and took out a leather case; from one of the inner pockets he produced the ragged bit of dirty parchment given to him by the old Eurasian.

"What do you think of that?" he asked, half in earnest; "there's something aged enough, and grimy enough, in all conscience, to please even you! An old chap I befriended the other day gave it to me just before he died—he kept burbling about some treasure of sorts, and a Spanish swashbuckler relative of his . . ."

Brendon picked up the parchment, and glanced carelessly at the closely written sheet for an instant or two, and then his expression turned suddenly to one of deep interest.

"Well," asked Tollemache, lazily, beckoning to a passing servant for a couple of cocktails, "what do you think of it? Seems to be written in some outlandish language, doesn't it? I very nearly chucked away the whole thing."

"Gad! Thank your stars you didn't, my boy. I should rather like to take it back with me this evening and try to translate it. The stuff is so faded in parts that it will be a difficult job to decipher without a strong glass. I'll let you have it back to-morrow."

"Oh, keep it as long as you like, old man," said Algy tranquilly. "I dare say it's all a fraud, or a sort of heavy practical joke; though, all the same, the chap was mighty earnest about it," he added.

"There's something about a hill fort," murmured Brendon, poring over the document, "and—and a stone-flagged courtyard where Tippoo kept his great fighting gorillas. It goes on," he exclaimed presently, "to say that the treasure, whatever it is, is hidden twenty paces to the left of the entrance, buried beneath the outer wall, under a certain stone carved with a pomegranate tree. I say, Tollemache!" he broke off excitedly, leaning over towards Algy, "supposing this old yarn is true? Supposing there *is* treasure lying buried there, supposing . . ."

"Supposing," interrupted young Tollemache, with a sudden gleam in his blue eyes, "I got ten days' leave, and went off for a shoot in those hills—eh? and you came with me. Can you be ready the end of next week?"

But he got no reply, for Brendon had departed hastily to his own quarters in the club, with the precious parchment clutched tightly in his hands.

III.

The profound silence, almost oppressive in its heavy intensity, of the vast hill forests around them seemed to brood over the scene like an overshadowing cloud as Brendon and Tollemache, riding at the head of a little

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band of luggage-laden coolies, wended their way slowly along the rough mountain road.

Six of the latter's ten days' leave had already sped, and although they had had good sport, not a trace had they seen of the fort described in the old parchment.

At last Tollemache pulled up his pony with a jerk.

"What do you say to some grub?" he asked. "It's getting on towards five o'clock, and I'm fairly famished."

Dismounting, the two men sat down under a clump of tall pines while the servants unpacked the food.

"Presence!" said the head *shikari*, approaching—"it would be advisable to hurry, if we are to reach the next camp ground by daylight. There is a big storm approaching rapidly upon us. See!"

Almost as he spoke a vivid flash of lightning lit up the dusky twilight of the forest around them, followed by the low, angry rumble of distant thunder.

In an instant, with frightened cries and gesticulations, the coolies sprang to their feet, and hurriedly snatched up their loads, but hardly had they proceeded a couple of hundred yards when the whole mountain side was enveloped in a dense swirling mist.

"Well, I guess our wisest course would be to stop right here," said Brendon at last, trying in vain to peer through the deepening gloom. "We don't know how many precipices there may be lying at our feet, waiting for us!"

But the guide demurred vehemently when a halt was proposed. "The sahibs might trust him implicitly; had he not lived on these hills since he was so high—a mere toddling infant? It was not wise to tarry after sunset in these parts; there were many bad things to be considered—fever, for instance, and all manner of evil spirits. Let the sahibs but hurry a little, and then the whole party would soon be safely housed in the next camp ground."

Presently, as they crept cautiously on through the dim light of the ever-thickening mist, Tollemache suddenly uttered a loud exclamation:

"Hullo! what's that over to your left? You'll catch a glimpse of it in a moment through the trees. There—now do you see? Here, Perumal," he shouted to the guide as the man hurried up. "Here's a house of some sort close by; I saw it myself through the drifting fog. Now, let's have no more nonsense about hurrying on to the next camp, for there the sahib and I, and all of you are going to sleep to-night. Those are my orders!"

The man opened his lips to expostulate, but Tollemache stopped him with a peremptory movement of his hand, and the old fellow, shrugging his shoulders with a resigned expression, turned away slowly, and began to shout orders to the straggling coolies. And then suddenly, without a moment's warning, the mist rolled away almost as quickly as it had swept down upon them, disclosing to their astonished gaze a low rambling building, half in ruins, and almost hidden from view by the great masses of luxuriant vegetation around it.

Dismounting, and throwing the reins to a couple of coolies, the two men walked rapidly up to the picturesque old gateway in the high wall.

Slowly picking their way in among the moss-grown stones and the fissures made by the ravages of the fierce mountain storms, they came presently to an inner inclosure, around which were the remains of a wide stone roof.

"How about this for to-night?" asked Tollemache, turning to his companion. "The camp ground we were making for is at least five miles away, and thanks to that infernal coolie falling down the *khud* and delaying us a couple of hours, it will be dark before we get there; the moon doesn't rise till nearly ten o'clock."

"Right you are, old man," assented Brendon. "We'll set those chaps to collect wood and get a decent fire, anyhow. That storm has about drenched the whole lot of us!"

Suddenly, as they retraced their steps towards the gate, Tollemache slipped upon the soaking weeds, and fell headlong into the middle of a great mass of brambles.

"Good heavens, what made you do that?" laughed Brendon, as his friend scrambled up an instant later, his face a network of scratches.

"I fell over some filthy thing or other," he said furiously, trying to pull a long thorn out of his wrist. "Wonder what it could have been?"

Beating the bushes aside with his crop, he searched the ground round them.

"Hullo, what's this? Good heavens, Brendon, can it be possible? Look here!"

Hurriedly trampling down the long rank grass, he exposed a heavy iron ring deeply welded into the worn stone flags at their feet. For a moment Brendon stared at it stupidly;

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then he clutched his companion's arm in a frenzy of excitement.

"Why, it's the courtyard of the fighting gorillas!" he gasped. "It must be; there's another ring over there, and another! The old parchment mentioned large iron rings to which the gorillas were tethered. To think we have actually found the place after all! What a bit of unheard-of luck, eh?"

Brendon took off his hat and wiped his heated brow.

"*Sahib!*" exclaimed a deep guttural voice close behind them.

Both men turned round with a start It was the old *shikari*.

"What the blazes do *you* want?" demanded Tollemache angrily. "What do you mean by creeping after us like this?"

"Presence!" salaamed the old man, "we cannot remain in this accursed place to-night. No man, even the Government runners, will pass this road after sunset. These ruins are full of devils and evil spirits that have been here beyond the count of man. All the coolies have already fled to the nearest village in the valley below, and—and I go, too, *sahib*."

"The scoundrels!" exclaimed Tollemache. "All right, Perumal," he added, "if you go, not a *pice* of *buksheesh* will you get when we break up camp!"

"As the *sahibs* will!" replied the old man abjectly; "but I dare not stay here!"

The next moment, as silently as a shadow, he disappeared amongst the thick scrub.

As they retraced their steps towards the gate, Tollemache slipped upon the soaking weeds, and fell headlong into the middle of a great mass of brambles.

IV.

A thin, filmy mist still hovered like a transparent silver veil above the ruins of the old fort as the moon rose slowly over the rugged summits of the dark, silent hills.

Save for the continuous whirring of the great cicala beetles in the dense foliage overhead, the vast forests seemed wrapped in a heavy slumber.

A dry branch snapped with a loud crack that echoed eerily through the deserted courtyard as Brendon and Tollemache, the former carrying a camp lantern, crept slowly along the side of the crumbling wall till they reached the outer gate.

"Gad, it's just as well these coolies did bolt!" said the latter with a short laugh.

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"Things would have been a trifle complicated had they caught sight of the treasure—if there is any!"

He started back with an oath as the shrill scream of an angry monkey broke through the oppressive stillness of the night close above their heads.

Brendon laughed.

"Pull yourself together, old man!" he exclaimed, holding the lantern higher. "That must have been the spirit of one of old Tippoo's fighting gorillas, eh?"

"Ass!" replied Tollemache. "Come on. Let's search the ground. Now, twenty paces to the left of the gate."

Slowly, with the swinging lantern conjuring up long, quivering black shadows on their path, the two men measured the distance foot by foot.

Twenty paces! At last it was completed, and then a horrible doubt crept over their minds.

The yellow gleams of the lantern, flashing to and fro, disclosed, not a trace of a carved pomegranate anywhere.

"That infernal half-caste must have been lying to us, after all!" said Tollemache bitterly, turning away.

"No, by gad! Here it is!" gasped his companion, and, tearing away a heavy rope of wild jasmine close to where they stood, he pointed to a piece of crumbling carving.

For an instant the two men stood and looked at each other, almost too dumfounded to speak.

The next moment, with hammer and chisel, they set to work upon the carved panel with breathless haste.

Presently, as they paused for a short rest, Tollemache began to notice a faint, sickly odour—musky, penetrating—that seemed to be creeping over the whole place.

The very atmosphere seemed to be soaked with it.

"Faugh! How this place stinks!" he said, sniffing the air with a puzzled expression. "I don't remember noticing it when we arrived here, do you?"

Brendon did not reply, for slowly, very slowly, the slab of stone was beginning to move.

"Now then—one more wrench and it's out!" he gasped at last, while he and Tollemache bent all their strength on the straining iron bar which they had forced between the stones. "By gad! that's done it!" he exclaimed in jubilant tones, as all at once the stone fell with a dull thud into the scrub at their feet.

Flashing the lantern into the hole, they saw within a square metal box of filigree work.

Dragging the box out slowly—for it was very heavy—they wrenched open the lid, holding the lantern close to it.

The quivering rays of light flashed suddenly upon the sparkle of precious stones—there seemed to be myriads of them—the soft iridescent sheen of great pearls, and the dull yellow of heavy golden anklets and head ornaments crusted with gems.

"Well, upon my soul, this about takes the cake!" whispered Tollemache. "Why, dash it all, we shall both be millionaires and live like—— Hullo! What's the matter, old chap?" he asked, stopping abruptly as Brendon suddenly clutched his arm with a grip that made him wince.

"Look! Over there!" muttered his companion. "Those odd shadows among the trees. Why—good heavens!—they're hovering all round this clearing!"

Bending, he snatched up the iron crowbar that they had let fall to the ground in the excitement of opening the box.

Tollemache looked up in surprise. Then he, too, sprang to his feet, a look of sheer horror blanching his sunburnt face. Everywhere—in the trees, on the heaps of crumbling masonry, dodging behind boulders—there seemed to be huge, shadowy gorillas, silent, alert, their malevolent, yellow eyes, cruel, unblinking, intent on the two men standing near the wall.

It seemed to Tollemache, staring with fear-dilated eyes into the forest in front of him, as if the ghoul-like hordes melted away into the drifting cobwebs of mist, only to reappear the next moment dimly visible in the pale moonlight that here and there struggled through the dense foliage of the interlacing branches overhead.

"Why, great heavens!" exclaimed Brendon under his breath, "this place must be haunted! Those horrors over there don't look like things of flesh and blood. They must be—— Ah! What's that?"

A huge black shape sprang suddenly through the ranks of the gorillas, and then, as though catching sight of the two men for the first time, stopped short, mouthing and gibbering, great flecks of foam dropping from its jaws.

Slowly, silently, always watching, the great hairy brute crept on, inch by inch, until only a short space remained between it and the two men cowering against the wall.

The strain was becoming unbearable.

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A huge black shape sprang suddenly through the ranks of the gorillas, and then, as though catching sight of the two men for the first time, stopped short, mouthing and gibbering.

Tollemache fingered his revolver nervously, but what was one against that crowd of devils—for surely the thousands of grey shapes behind the black one were real? To fire would be the sheerest madness; instantly Brendon and he would be torn limb from limb.

All at once Brendon laughed aloud, a high, shrill, maniacal laugh.

And then, lifting his iron bar high above his head, he hurled it with all his strength at the huge black gorilla, who had crept up to within a couple of yards of the spot upon which he stood.

The next moment, with shrill shrieks and gibberings that echoed and re-echoed through the forest, the monster was upon him.

"Keep your back to the wall at all costs!" yelled Tollemache, struggling to beat off the furious onslaught of the great black beast as best he could.

The next moment hairy, clammy hands were round his throat, crushing the life out of him slowly, cruelly. As he fired he seemed to see Brendon go down beside him, shrieking and struggling.

A blood-red mist surged over him in a choking wave, suffocating, blinding him; he sank unconscious upon the trampled scrub.

V.

The dawn was just breaking when Tollemache opened his eyes again. A sharp agonising pain shot through his right arm as he tried to sit up.

Good heavens—what had happened? Where was Brendon?

And then, all at once his dazed senses cleared and he remembered the horrors of the past night.

But whither had Brendon disappeared? And where was the box of treasure?

The confused murmur of voices, and the tread of naked feet close to him made him crawl cautiously to his knees behind a big rock to see what was happening.

"Hi! You scoundrel—leave that box alone!" he shouted.

At the sound of his voice the little crowd of natives scattered like chaff before him; they were his own baggage coolies.

"Here you, Perumal! Come here!" he called angrily. "Where's the other *sahib*—he was close beside me when—when——"

The old *shikari* came back with blanched face and shaking knees.

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"One is alive after all!" he muttered, staring with terror-stricken eyes at Tollemache. "I thought——"

"Come here, and tell me where Brendon *sahib* is!" shouted the subaltern.

"Presence!" said the old man in a gutteral whisper, "the other *sahib* is dead! The body is yonder; we have covered it with one of the men's blankets."

"Dead!" gasped Tollemache, hardly able to grasp the dread meaning of the man's words, "surely he can't be dead!"

Fiercely he turned upon the trembling *shikari*.

"Ah! And so you thought we were both safely out of the way, and were going to make off with the loot, were you, eh?"

An evil look, full of crafty cunning, flashed for a second over the native's wrinkled face. Then he cast down his eyes.

"Nay, *sahib!* We were but placing a blanket over the body when you caught sight of us."

"Bring me that metal box!" ordered the subaltern. "There it is, behind that rock!"

He got to his feet with an effort and staggered over to where Brendon was lying.

Bending down, he lifted up a corner of the blanket and then recoiled with a gasp of horror, for the whole body was almost torn to pieces. Beside the unfortunate man lay the corpse of a huge gorilla.

"Hullo! What's all this!" exclaimed a strange voice.

A short, bronzed Englishman stood at the edge of the little clearing, staring with amazement at the strange scene before him.

"My name's Grant," he went on. "I'm in the Forest Service, and this place is in my beat, and hearing strange sounds I came over to see what was going on."

Tollemache sat down on a flat rock; his head was beginning to feel dizzy again.

"We were delayed on our march yesterday," he said, looking up dully. "Then a storm kept us back, and an accident we had with one of the coolies, so we spent the night in these ruins. My friend and I had heard of some treasure hereabouts, and we were taking a look round when we were set upon by a whole crowd of huge, grey gorillas, and—" pointing to the mangled body at his feet—"as you see, they killed him."

"Gorillas!" exclaimed Grant, looking hard at the subaltern, "why, my good chap, you must have been dreaming! I've never heard of one being seen in these hills."

Without a word Tollemache turned and pointed to the dead gorilla lying half hidden by Brendon's body.

"I shot that one," he said quietly. "He was the leader. I could swear the others were large grey gorillas."

"Well, I'm hanged if I know what to think of this business," said Grant, after a pause.

"Protector of the Poor!" whimpered the old *shikari*, sidling up, "the *sahib* speaks truth. They are the spirits of Tippoo Rajah's one-time celebrated Fighting Gorillas. Every year at this time they come. I heard they were abroad, and tried to warn the two *sahibs*, but they would not listen."

"Go! Call my men!" interrupted Grant abruptly. "And bid these coolies collect sufficient branches to make a *dhoolie*."

VI.

Early that afternoon as the melancholy little procession reached its destination—a small hill-station some eight miles distant, Grant halted suddenly as they passed the mud-walled police station.

"Great Scott! Look at that!" he exclaimed, beckoning to Tollemache, and pointing to a large notice posted on the door. "Why—that must be the chap you shot, eh?"

Tollemache read the notice through slowly.

REWARD OF FIFTY RUPEES!

The above reward will be paid to anyone giving information as to the whereabouts of a large gorilla which escaped last Tuesday from the camp of Friedenburgh's Travelling Circus. The animal is believed to have got away into the foot-hills near Tenyam Ghat.

Apply to Police Sergeant.

"Sounds like it, certainly," said the subaltern in a low voice. "But how did he manage to get amongst those—those other queer customers, eh?"

The forest officer shrugged his shoulders and turned away.

"Wait till you've been in the mysterious East as long as I have, my boy. You won't ask questions of that kind then, I fancy!" he said carelessly. "This is a bad business for you, but be thankful that you've got that little haul from the Pomegranate Tree!"

Tollemache said nothing. His glance rested on the *dhoolie* swaying along in front, the rough litter of branches that contained all that was left of Brendon, his greatest friend.

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FLIRTING

(AND VERY NICE TOO!)

Experiments in an Untaught Art Illustrated by Leading Humorous Artists.

By Sidney Mattingly.

"To act with giddiness or with a desire to attract attention" is the dictionary definition of "to flirt." Certainly Mr. Smith's charming damsel fulfils it to the letter.

There are many misapprehensions about flirting. Some people think it is only possible on the river beneath a silvery moon or in a secluded sitting-out place at a dance with the fumes of the *Blue Danube* waltz and the champagne bubbling together in your brain.

These ideas must be cleared away. It is possible to flirt on the top of a Tooting tram after a repast of three-cornered jam-puffs and ginger-beer; more difficult perhaps, but quite within the scope of the experienced flirt.

In order to enjoy flirting to the full, it is necessary first to become engaged. You then, of course, proceed to flirt with some-

"Deserting the Cow for the Calf." Mr. Mills' idea of the milk-maid who forsakes her duties.

one else. Some people go even further and get married, but this is not really necessary, especially if you can secure a *fiancé* (or *ée*) of a fierce and jealous disposition. This will add enormously to the excitement of the situation, and if you happen to be a girl, and are fond of boxing displays, you will see plenty. It is a good thing, however, to exercise a little care in your choice of a *fiancé*.

I knew a girl once who, being a born flirt, naturally had to get engaged to someone, and she did so carelessly without making the necessary inquiries. He was an apparently unimpeachable

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curate, but it turned out afterwards that he was also the Amateur Middle Weight Champion, and after he had half killed two or three youths whom he had caught holding his Helen's hand, she became an absolute drug on the market, so to speak.

It is somewhat difficult to explain the finer points of flirting on paper. A practical demonstration is really required. The surprising thing is that, while it is possible to purchase instruction in such comparatively useless accomplishments as German, trigonometry, and housekeeping, no enterprising person has advertised a course of lessons in flirting.

The first thing that must be learnt in this difficult but fascinating study is when to flirt—also, with whom. Flirting is always in season, but it takes two to make a flirtation, and, unless the other party to the transaction is willing, not to say enthusiastic failure is inevitable. It is unwise to attempt a flirtation at sea unless you are both good sailors. Girls should avoid motor-car flirtations until the car has broken down. If the man has any sense at all, this is sure to happen, and if he hasn't, he won't be able to flirt anyway.

"Both Old Hands." Miss McKie's comment on the Summer Girl, with whom flirting is a fine art.

Great care must be exercised in the choice of a flirting partner. Individual taste may be considered up to a certain point—as to colour of eyes, age, shape of nose, size of boots, and trifles like that; but be sure the other party to the transaction understands the rules of the game.

A very sad case came under my notice recently. Arabella Smith was the girl's name, and she might justly be described as an international flirt. She had flirted with Frenchmen, Germans, Russians, Japanese, as well as with an aboriginal African prince and two or three Rajahs. But she did not know when to draw the line. She overstepped it when she attempted to flirt with an American gentleman from Cincinnati, Ill. The result was inevitable, but none the less sad. After a week, he proposed. Such a result of a flirtation had never occurred in the whole of Arabella's experience. Besides being a flirt, she was, of course, engaged already. She refused him. It was no good. He continued to propose by word of mouth, telegram, telephone, and special messenger. At the

Mr. Alfred Leete's sketch is a warning to married men, who should allow for the existence of telescopes when indulging in a mild flirtation.

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Esmond gives us the jolly old salt who forgets his seamanship in his efforts to impress a charming mermaid.

end of a month, finding Arabella still adamant, he wrote her a brief note of farewell, explaining that her heartless conduct was the cause of his rash act, went into a railway refreshment-room and consumed a sandwich, a bath bun, and two glasses of sherry.

In the case of an everyday being this would be the end of the story. But Arabella's American was no ordinary man. He underwent three operations for appendicitis, and was unconscious for several months.

All this time Arabella, whose heart was touched by his devotion, continued to nurse him; when he finally recovered consciousness, his first act was to propose again. Her proud spirit was broken at last, and she accepted him.

They were married within a few weeks, and her other *fiancé* was best man. The worst of it is that Arabella now has to live in the States, and as she dares not risk flirting with any more Americans, on account of the risk of bigamy, her career may be considered closed. She keeps her hand in by flirting with her husband.

Her sad example should be a warning to others.

When all is said and done, flirting remains one of the things worth while in this transitory life. What more satisfactory than to charm away the scruples of some coy, or trying-to-be-coy, damsel, and pass a scandalous hour holding her hand or toying with her golden locks?

Poets have hymned the decent and glorious pursuit of flirting, and after all they ought to know, for poets are a bad lot. To all true men the lure of a wayward curl, a silk-clad ankle, or—in the dear, dead days beyond recall when such things were worn—a fluttering petticoat, is irresistible.

And what girl can forbear to dally with a "really nice" man? Only the plain ones—and they don't exist!

So mammas may upbraid, and fathers may frown, but the good old pastime of flirting will go forward as long as the world spins round.

"Three Strings to Her Bow." Mr. Thomas Henry's idea of the lady who is not too old at sixty.

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BONBONS AND BARBARA.

A Sweet Story.

By Dorothy Rose.

I.

Barbara Loyle kicked a portly silk cushion across her rose-pink room, and chuckled with unholy glee when it imperilled the fair life of a cut-glass candlestick on the mantelpiece.

"Nothing will induce me to marry tintacks, even if they are backed up by a cottage at Newport and a young palace on Fifth Avenue," she declared to the mirror. "Aunt Hermione can angle all she likes; I refuse to be the bait."

It was the fact that Aunt Hermione intended to angle on her behalf that had aroused such righteous indignation in the heart of pretty, penniless Barbara. Oliver Flint might be the heir to his father's millions, but that made it the more ignominious to be hurled at his head. Barbara had experienced her aunt's matrimonial tactics before, and had blushed with shame and humiliation at the brazen methods employed for the roping in of eligible youths, who should not only take an orphan niece off her hands, but add lustre to her already considerable social fame.

"I know exactly what will happen," mused Barbara, her grey eyes meditative, her pretty mouth curved resentfully. "Aunt Hermione will get to know him—she'll improvise some mutual friends, give a dinner for him, arrange some rather intimate situation, and before he knows it the misguided young man will have showered the tintacks at my feet. It's an appalling prospect and I won't stand it!"

The puzzle was how to avoid it, for a young lady who is dependent on her aunt's bounty for every hairpin, and has no special attainments beyond a deft hand at concocting home-made sweets, is severely handicapped. It was the sweets that gave Barbara her inspiration.

"I might open a shop," she said, sinking among the pink cushions on the sofa, "a dear little place all mauve muslin and pink satin ribbon, but London's studded with them already, and Aunt Hermione would die of horror. Perhaps in the country there might be a chance—village shops never have anything but bull's-eyes—but I don't think I *could* stand a stuffy shop, though I love fields and little pigs and things."

Barbara always declared it was the scent of the honeysuckle that stood on her dressing-table, with its hint of shady lanes and sun-kissed meadows, that suggested the idea of a walking tour, on which she could pay her way by selling sweets, and, perhaps, giving lessons in making them. She jumped to her feet and pirouetted round the room with delight, then flew to her wardrobe and made searching investigation of her more serviceable garments.

"Two navy costumes, a heather tweed—I can't take much, for I shall have the sweets to carry. I've got to make a lot for the Missionary Bazaar, and I shall take possession of them."

Barbara pulled out her recipe book from the bureau and examined it eagerly. Suddenly she flung it down.

"Question is, where am I going?" she murmured. Impetuous as ever, she rummaged for an atlas in her corner cupboard, and regarded the map of England with a meditative air. She closed her eyes for a moment; her finger hovered over the page; then it descended. She opened her eyes.

"Cornwall!" she cried. "Cream and pasties! Hurrah!"

II.

"Great Scott!"

The bronzed young man at the steering-wheel of the big grey car slowed up suddenly as he rounded a bend of the lane which wound waywardly between flower-decked hedges. In the middle of the white road a young girl stood gazing with rueful eyes at a pile of ribbon-tied chocolate boxes lying pell-mell in the dust. A small valise with a broken strap dangled from her hand and explained the tragedy.

Peterson's keen brown eyes took in the situation at a glance, nor did they fail to note the pretty curves of the drooping lips,

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and the big grey eyes with their long, dark lashes. Having pulled up miraculously within six inches of a pink-tied box, he sprang out of the car and, cap in hand, proffered his assistance.

For a moment Barbara's clear eyes scanned the newcomer resentfully; then she capitulated to the frank smile and quietly capable manner.

"I don't think they'll be any the worse," he assured her, flicking a box vigorously with his handkerchief ere he handed it to her, for Barbara had seated herself in the hedge and was busily re-tying bows and overhauling her stock generally.

"I'm sure they won't," she agreed with a captivating smile. He was an enterprising young man and it was not long before, seated by her side in the long grass, he was in possession of the salient facts of the situation. He had a persuasive manner—Barbara confessed to him her enterprise though she withheld the reason, and was astonished and a little indignant to find he regarded the affair as a huge joke, and by no means the serious scheme she considered it.

"Everyone's been very good to me," she told him with dignity. "They simply love my *marrons glacés* and chocolate caramels! Two or three people have let me use their stoves to make the sweets in return for lessons, and the whole countryside has fed me with saffron cake and splits and cream. They've been perfect dears!" she finished enthusiastically.

Her companion nodded approvingly; it would be a surly countryside indeed that did not do homage to this slim, dainty girl with the golden brown hair and apple-blossom cheeks, set off to perfection by the blue of her knitted silk coat and cap.

All too soon the last box was bestowed safely in the valise. The man rose and opened the door of the car invitingly.

"I'm bound for Pendover, and I think you said you were going there," he observed as Barbara sprang to her feet. "May I give you a lift?"

For a moment she hesitated. She was going to Pendover—it was the place to which certain beautiful boxes and various delicacies, not usually to be obtained in the country, were to be forwarded for the concoction of her wares. The sun shone down remorselessly on the dusty road; the valise was no light weight, and already she had covered six miles that morning. Certainly she knew nothing of this young man, but he had the face of one to be trusted. Barbara felt she could take a good deal on trust for the sake of a spin through the winding lanes in such a car.

The drive was all too short. Barbara learnt that the young man's name was James Peterson, and gave her own as Barbara Dane, having, for the sake of secrecy, relinquished her own surname. The car slid silently between the green hedges, where tall foxgloves stood like sentinels, and honeysuckle and meadowsweet filled the air with fragrance. Incredibly soon they entered the straggling village, and pulled up outside the "Sunflower Inn," a comfortable whitewashed little place, with green benches below the latticed windows, and a general air of sleepy prosperity.

Mrs. Tregarth, the buxom landlady, received them with open arms; Barbara's fame had preceded her, and the good soul readily promised her the run of the spacious kitchen and the loan of unlimited pots and pans for the manufacture of her sweetmeats, if only she might be permitted to view the proceedings.

They lunched together in the low-ceilinged parlour, looking on to the orchard. Pink roses nodded in at the window; the air was sweet with the scent of lavender; they chatted like two children and gladdened the landlady's heart by their appreciation of her choicest raspberries and an enormous bowl of yellow cream. Barbara had taken off her blue coat and cap—she looked deliciously young and fresh in her white silk shirt. Peterson wondered afresh what could have induced her to undertake her present exploit, and wondered in vain, for she did not enlighten him.

"I should love a cigarette," she sighed as he produced his case, "but I'm afraid of shocking our good hostess. She's such a motherly dear, and I daren't risk my chance of getting up stock. I'm going to spend the afternoon in a pink pinafore—that is if the village shop can supply sugar and one or two other necessaries."

The village shop *did* supply them, and they were carried home in triumph by Barbara and Peterson, together with the packet from London which they fetched from the drowsy little station. At the kitchen door she dismissed him with pretty imperiousness, while Mrs. Tregarth invested her in the pink pinafore, and the rosy-cheeked servant, disarmed by Barbara's sweet smile and winning manners, made over her kingdom without a murmur.

An hour later, Barbara, charmingly flushed

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and serious, was deftly crowning chocolates with walnuts and crystallised violets, when Peterson appeared in the doorway.

"Any objection to my selling a box of your chocolates?" he asked. "There's someone in the Inn taken a fancy to them."

"Not a bit! Sell all you like!" replied Barbara. "I shall be delighted, for how I'm going to carry all this lot as well I'm sure I don't know. They are so heavy." Whereupon the young man departed with the preoccupied air of one who plans a *coup*.

A couple of hours later, Peterson, bursting into the kitchen, found the place strewn, as it were, with sweets—chocolates, caramels, *marrons glacés*—and Barbara, tired but radiant, inserting toothsome pink fondants into tiny paper cases, preparatory to packing them in gold and white boxes, and tying them up with rose-pink ribbon.

"All your sweets are gone!" he cried triumphantly, "went like wildfire. The price was on every box, so I didn't bother to ask you. Here's the proceeds!" and he counted out 12s. 6d. on the table beside her.

"How ripping of you!" Barbara sank into a chair and raised grateful eyes to his. "It's glorious to think I have made a clean sweep of the old stock before starting on the new, and 12s. 6d. is a very welcome addition to the exchequer."

"They simply sold themselves," he assured her emphatically, noting the tired droop of her head, the listless pose of the slim, pink-clad figure leaning back in the high-backed wooden chair, "You're dead beat," he went on. "Let me pack up the rest for you," and he made a raid on a trayful of chocolate almonds. Barbara sprang to her feet and clutched his arm.

"They're wet!" she cried. "It's awfully good of you, but they won't be fit to pack for an hour at least. Meanwhile, I'll go upstairs and rest. My room's delightful—it looks out on the orchard—and there's the duckiest four-poster. I'm simply dying to try it."

The four-poster was a thing of joy, but the sun streaming in through the lattice window made the little room so unbearably hot that Barbara at last determined to invade one of the front rooms, which were comparatively cool, and was soon established by the admiring maid on a sofa beside the window that looked out on to the village street. She woke to a cool breeze and the sound of children's laughter. Lifting the thin muslin blind she peeped out. A little gasp of astonishment broke from her lips, and her cheeks flushed angrily at the sight that met her eyes.

There, seated on one of the green wooden benches in front of the inn, sat Mr. Peterson, surrounded by empty chocolate boxes, while in front of him, on a grassy patch, a dozen or so rosy-cheeked children waited expectantly for the handful of goodies he was about to throw to them.

The scramble was at its height, and Peterson, his brown, quizzical face wearing its most genial smile, was broaching a box of caramels, when Barbara, her hair adorably ruffled, her eyes flashing under their level brows, emerged with appalling suddenness from the inn door.

The young man paused, his hand full of caramels arrested in mid-air, a look of dismay that was wholly comical on his face. Barbara did not notice it; she marched straight up to the seat and confronted him.

"I understood you had sold my sweets to customers at the Inn," she burst forth. "It seems you were deceiving me—you bought them yourself."

"I did," he owned, rising and looking down on her with an indulgent smile that riled her intensely. "I wanted to give the children a treat—poor little beggars must be sick of bull's-eyes and pear-drops, and——"

"Of course, if you consider it necessary to feed them on chocolates at 2s. 6d. a pound you are at perfect liberty to do so," returned Barbara loftily, "but I fail to see why you were not honest about it. It looks as though you had some other motive. Perhaps you thought me incapable of selling my own wares?"

"Oh, you'd have sold them in time, no doubt," admitted Peterson airily, though he was sorely tempted to take her by the shoulders and shake her.

Barbara's face flamed. Only her determination to preserve an attitude of dignity prevented her from stamping her foot.

"You really ought to be very grateful to me," he continued, "for taking them off your hands. You'll have as much as you can do to sell all you made this afternoon."

"They'll be gone in two or three days," flared Barbara.

"Shall we say Thursday? That'll give you three clear days," he suggested, throwing the last caramel to the last small boy.

Barbara's head tilted defiantly. "Is that a challenge?"

"Certainly, if you like to take it," was the ready reply, and thrusting his hands into the

["BONBONS AND BARBARA" continued overleaf.]

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pockets of his tweed coat he strolled to the door, a provoking smile on his lips.

Barbara passed in before him, and the next moment was packing sweets with furious speed, and making preparations to depart early next morning *en route* for Tregarris, the north coast village where she meant to spend a few days in a bungalow placed at her disposal by Jean Meadows, an old and trusted school friend.

III.

Barbara, tired and prettily sunburnt, paused before the imposing front of The Ocean Hotel, which dominated the sleepy fishing village of Tregarris, and regarded it with appraising eye. It was Thursday afternoon, and still two boxes of chocolates reposed, unsold, in her valise. Nothing but the fact of Peterson's challenge would have induced her to enter such a place. She would see him at Tregarris—he had announced his intention of staying there—she remembered his provoking smile, his frivolous comments on her enterprise. The next moment she marched boldly up the granite steps and entered the hotel.

The only occupant of the lounge was a thin, colourless youth with a canary-coloured moustache and watery blue eyes. The Hon. Oscar Swankington was a *blasé* young man, and having exhausted the resources of the neighbourhood in the way of fishing and golf, was finding life a somewhat dull affair. The arrival of Barbara, flushed, a trifle dusty but undeniably pretty, just saved him from taking refuge in sleep! He dragged himself from the depths of his chair and advanced to meet her with what he considered an ingratiating smile on his unintelligent features.

Barbara stated her business briefly; a certain familiarity in the man's glance warned her that a strictly businesslike attitude would be advisable.

"Selling chocolates, eh?" The Hon. Oscar handled one of the boxes languidly. "Jove! you're too pretty to be selling 'em. Just the kind of girl I should like to give 'em to, what?"

Barbara's face flamed, and she turned to depart, her head held high though her knees trembled. "I imagined this hotel was patronised by gentlemen," she remarked. "It seems I was mistaken."

"Not so fast!" The man thrust himself between her and the swing doors. "No need to be offended. Awfully sorry and all that. I'll have both boxes. Never could resist a pretty girl," and with a fatuous leer he held out half-a-sovereign on his flabby palm.

"Five shillings," said Barbara tersely, and took the coin with palpable distaste. She fumbled in her purse for the change, and the Hon. Oscar, seeing a chance of avenging her scornful speech, took it, like the contemptible little cad he was.

"Don't bother about the change; keep it for yourself," he said with studied insolence, backing away slowly to watch the effect of his words.

Barbara had a straight eye, and the coin caught the Hon. Oscar full on the nose, to his unbounded indignation and the huge delight of a waiter who was crossing the lounge at that moment. Before he had recovered from the shock, Barbara had flung open the door and, forgetful of the two chocolate boxes, had departed, leaving him to caress the injured member and meditate on a possible means of revenge.

Meanwhile, Barbara, having obtained the key of the bungalow from a trustful house-agent, made her way to the sand dunes, where three or four neat wooden bungalows looked out across a golden beach on to the blue waters of the Atlantic.

Tired and dispirited as she was, Jean's little bungalow seemed a haven of refuge, and as she sipped her tea in the tiny blue-walled sitting-room, with the sound of the waves falling soothingly on her ears, the unpleasant episode of the afternoon was almost forgotten, and a happy sense of triumph stole over her at the thought that she had at least disposed of her stock and so scored off Peterson, though, to be sure, the last two boxes of chocolates were not yet paid for.

Somehow, in spite of her avowed resentment, the memory of the young man with the lean brown face and quizzical eyes was very welcome after her recent interview with such an unwholesome piece of humanity as the Hon. Oscar. Tea over, she set about getting up her stock. Dusk was falling and the little kitchen was literally paved with sweets when a knock brought her from the manufacture of caramels to the front door.

To her surprise and dismay the Hon. Oscar stood there, complacent and immaculate in his pale grey suit and panama. He regarded her with admiration—Barbara could invest even a pink cooking apron with charm.

"I came to ask your pardon," he began. "'Pon my soul I didn't mean to offend you. And I want to pay you for the chocolates. Awfully glad if you'd sell me some more, what?"

Barbara murmured conventional thanks as she took the money, and debated as to the

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wisdom of allowing the young man to enter. Her hesitation led to her undoing, for before she realised his intention the Hon. Oscar had slid past her into the passage, and there was nothing for it but to lead the way into the kitchen and exhibit her wares.

Her customer dallied over his purchases in a way that nearly drove the girl frantic, and, having completed his transaction, evinced no desire to go. If Barbara had been a little more observant she might have noticed an ugly glitter in his pale eyes, the suspicion of a snarl in his smoothly-turned phrases. The Hon. Oscar's vanity had been wounded, and he thirsted for revenge.

"Nice little place, this," he observed. They were in the sitting-room, whither Barbara had gone in search of paper and string to tie up his package. "Wonder you care to be here alone, though. Not scared, are you?"

"Not in the least," she answered coldly. She was very tired; all she longed for was the little white bed with its hangings of rose-bud chintz.

Her indifference nettled the young man. He came a step nearer. "'Tisn't the thing for a young girl—a deuced pretty one, too—to stay here alone, what? Wonder the——"

"Would you mind going?" Barbara's voice was dangerously level—her flashing eyes, the proud lift of her head roused the Hon. Oscar to action.

"It depends on yourself," he retorted airily. "You've got to pay for that pretty behaviour of yours this afternoon. I won't be too hard—just one kiss, perhaps two." He advanced towards her; his flabby fingers closed about her arm.

"You coward!" Barbara wrenched herself free, but he caught her round the waist; his face bent to hers, gloating and repulsive.

The next moment he lay prone on the floor, hurled there by the sinewy arms of a young man in brown tweed, who had entered unceremoniously by the window.

"How dare you?" spluttered the Hon. Oscar as, red of face and looking entirely contemptible, he struggled to his feet.

Peterson ignored his existence, and turned to Barbara, who had sunk, white and trembling, on to a chair.

"Shall I chuck him out?" he asked, in the tone usually reserved for potatoes and other inanimate things.

Barbara nodded gratefully. But the Hon. Oscar did not court further humiliation; he was a flabby little specimen, and Peterson had a grip of steel. With one baneful glare at the almost tearful girl he slunk out of the room, and was seen no more.

"I'm so glad you came." Barbara heaved a sigh of relief as she finished her recital of the events leading up to the visit of the Hon. Oscar—the presence of the tall, capable looking figure in brown tweed was very comforting. "My friend who lent me the bungalow told me it was lonely; it was the height of good luck that you happened to be passing."

"Yes." There was a meditative look on the man's face; he glanced at her sharply, seemed about to speak, and relapsed into a silence broken by Barbara, who announced in triumphant tones:

"At any rate, I have to thank that little cad for enabling me to fulfil your challenge; he bought my last two boxes of chocolates."

He laughed gaily, and Barbara, having recovered her usual good spirits, they forgot the Hon. Oscar, and bestowed their attention on more worthy topics. Later they had supper—a sketchy little meal, for Barbara had not expected company. And Peterson, with the vision of Barbara as she filled the coffee cups and wrestled with an ox tongue that refused to turn out, declared that it was a feast for the gods.

Supper over, he made ready to depart, and for the first time Barbara felt a little tremulous at the idea of being alone in the bungalow. Nevertheless she was frankly surprised when Peterson, with a somewhat self-conscious air, requested the loan of a rug.

Barbara produced a gay fluffy affair from the recesses of a cupboard and demanded an explanation.

"You see," he hesitated a little, "it's such a ripping night, and my car's there by the road—I can make quite a respectable bed on the seat. If I go to the hotel I shall certainly murder that impudent puppy who insulted you, and, well—you won't feel so lonely if I am within call."

Barbara's relief was evident in her shining eyes. "It's perfectly dear of you," she said softly. "I shall sleep now. Before—well, I was feeling rather helpless and early-Victorian. Good-night, and if new-laid eggs attract you, come in to breakfast."

He came in to breakfast, and was met by a prettily puzzled Barbara, who insisted on feeding him copiously on toast and eggs ere she would divulge the cause of her perplexity.

"It's awfully strange," she told him at last, "but this morning when I swept out this room I found a pair of men's slippers under

["BONBONS AND BARBARA" continued overleaf.]

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the sofa and a pipe tucked away behind the clock. And to crown all there is quite an array of male garments in the bedroom cupboard."

Peterson gave a low chuckle. "Were they green leather slippers of great size and antiquity?" he asked.

"They were!"

"Then I *was* right!" The man sat back in his chair and laughed with huge enjoyment. "You see the fact is, Miss Dane, I, too, had permission to use the bungalow, since your friend let it to a chum of mine for a month. He's been called up to town, but I meant to stay here all the same. That's why I happened to be on the spot when the Hon. Oscar was annoying you. I saw the light in the window, and thought—well, that someone was in the place who had no right there."

Barbara's face dimpled into a smile. "Just like Jean not to let me know! Why didn't you tell me?" she demanded reproachfully.

"Because—well—I couldn't turn you out, could I?" he asked, with the quizzical smile she was beginning to find rather attractive.

He was amply repaid for his close quarters of the night before by Barbara's gratitude—a gratitude that emboldened him to linger long over the breakfast table, and to offer his assistance in packing up the sweets which she had made the previous evening.

His departure was hastened by the arrival of Mrs. Wight, the vicar's wife, who, having a garden sale in prospect on the morrow, desired to add some of Barbara's wares to the very commonplace assortment which she knew would adorn the sweet stall.

"Mr. Swankington—the Hon. Oscar Swankington—advised me to come to you," said the portly lady in her high voice. "I shall want the sweets by noon to-morrow, and, of course, you will make a reduction since they are for charity. It will be a good advertisement for you."

Barbara exhibited no great enthusiasm at the prospect. She disliked this woman with the florid complexion and overpowering manner, and she was not a little puzzled at the Hon. Oscar's recommendation. Nevertheless she showed her sweets, allowed Mrs. Wight several free samples, and dutifully made a note of quantities and prices.

Barbara worked like a Trojan that day, adding to her stock and evolving fresh dainties with which to tempt the palates of the "county." At tea time she found time to slip into her sole white frock—one of those good-tempered crêpes which require no ironing—and to coax her rebellious hair into something like order. When Peterson arrived, laden with a great bowl of Cornish cream and saffron cakes innumerable, and the news that his landlady's daughter would bear her company at night, he found her seated on the porch amid an avalanche of gold and white boxes which she was deftly tying up with pink ribbons.

She was full of enthusiasm over her order, an enthusiasm which Peterson shared when he heard it might lead to her making a longer stay in Tregarris. The evening passed all too quickly; the moon rose and made night beautiful for them, and when Barbara crept—tired but radiant—to bed, the world held for her but one man.

Early next morning Barbara made her way to the Vicarage laden with the loose sweets which were to be arranged in dishes, meaning to return for the boxes which were all ready on the kitchen table.

She found Mrs. Wight fluttering round a pink and white draped stall like a frenzied turkey cock. Miss Dane hadn't got the boxes? Dear me! how tiresome! The stall must be ready by twelve—she had to dress and entertain visitors at lunch. Yes, certainly, fetch them, and *at once*.

Barbara, desirous of pacifying the lady and really sorry for her, to such a pitch of nervous anxiety was she worked up, sped back as quickly as the loose nature of the sand dunes would permit. To her surprise as she neared home, the Hon. Oscar rounded the corner of the bungalow, walking, for him, at unusual speed.

She entered the bungalow and made her way to the kitchen. There on the table was the array of boxes ready to be packed into her valise which stood ready in the corner. Quickly she commenced the task. Some of the bows had a strangely clumsy look, and Barbara frowned in perplexity as she coaxed them into shape; one she undid altogether and finding that the lid did not close properly, took it off to rearrange the contents.

For a moment she could hardly believe her eyes. There, mingled with the chocolate walnuts and creams were pebbles, ordinary common pebbles defiling the daintiness of her choicest sweets. Hastily she examined the other boxes—they had all been treated in the same way—quite half the contents had disappeared. It came to her in a flash—someone had been tampering with her wares. But who?

Instantly came the thought of Swankington

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—his guilty air and furtive look. She had not the smallest doubt he was the culprit. Had she not seen him leaving the precincts of the bungalow? She stooped to pick up a ribbon which had fallen to the floor, and in doing so her eyes fell on a handkerchief which lay under the table. She picked it up; she knew even before she examined the name in the corner to whom it belonged. Oscar Swankington had had his revenge.

There only remained sufficient sweets to fill some seven or eight boxes. Well, she would have to explain to the Vicar's wife. After all, it was she, Barbara, who would have to suffer the loss of time and expense—surely Mrs. Wight could not fail to be sympathetic.

To Barbara's utter amazement the lady received her story with recrimination and incredulity, and appeared to consider it a reflection on the morals of her parishioners.

It was then in sheer desperation Barbara voiced her suspicions and laid the blame of the matter at the feet of the Hon. Oscar. She could not have done herself a worse turn. Mrs. Wight literally hounded Barbara out of the garden, heaping upon her such abuse that the girl's one thought was to get away from the village.

So it was that late afternoon found her plodding wearily along one of the dusty white roads which led out of Tregarris. It was also the road along which Peterson must return on his drive back from Truro, which perhaps accounted for her choice. For two or three miles she struggled on gamely though the sun beat down fiercely, so that even her knitted blue silk coat seemed unbearable, and she was forced to take it off and add it to her load.

And then at last her pluck gave out; she was tired and discouraged, all her stock was gone, and how far she would have to go before finding a shelter for the night she knew not. Utterly heartsick, she sank down on the grassy bank at the roadside and sobbed broken-heartedly.

She was wiping her eyes with an absurd scrap of cambric when a big grey car slid round the bend of the lane. Peterson was usually a careful driver, but the recklessness with which he pulled up was simply criminal. In two strides he was by her side. She gave a wan little smile as he stood tall and comfortingly capable before her.

"Barbara, what is it?" he asked.

There was no gainsaying him. Brokenly Barbara told him of the sad story of the chocolates and the events which had led her to fly in despair from the village.

"And now," he said, when she had finished, "you intend going back to London?"

"I can't." Barbara shook her pretty head with a return of her old sprightliness. "You see—" and because he looked so pleasantly big and trustworthy, she poured out the whole tale of her aunt's intentions and her own plan to circumvent them.

"I simply *won't* marry him," she finished, "and I know if I go back Aunt Hermione will absolutely fling me at Oliver Flint's head."

"She couldn't if he didn't happen to be in town," remarked Peterson, and there was a gleam of amusement in his eyes.

"No—" Barbara rose to her feet, very sweet and appealing, and a trifle wistful. "Don't you think he is in London? Do you know where he is?"

"At the present moment"—Peterson beamed genially—"he is standing by the bank of a Cornish lane talking to the most charming girl in the world."

"You're not—you can't be," cried Barbara eagerly and with unconscious conceit.

"But I am—Oliver Flint, and your very humble servant. You see." he continued as Barbara waited with pink cheeks and parted lips for an explanation, "I had barely arrived in London before all the mammas made a dead set at me, so I came off down here to escape. Of course, I changed my name to avoid being tracked, and that's the whole thing in a nutshell."

Barbara nodded gravely. "It seemed as if we *were* to meet," she murmured. "Selling chocolates is rather exhausting, and I've been disillusioned just lately. Now I can go back to London with a quiet mind."

Somehow the idea did not seem to appeal to her; the eyes she raised to his were very wistful; her smile entirely lacked spontaneity.

"You *can*, but you're not going," announced Flint. He laid an arm about her shoulders—the sunlit lane was deserted—and in absolute content Barbara rested her head on his tweed-clad shoulder. "Here is the car; ten miles away is my mother—she will welcome you with open arms. Barbara, will you forget the tintacks, and come?"

Barbara lifted a radiant face to his. "You are a dear," she whispered as she kissed him. "I love tintacks, and I'll come!"

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STAMFORD'S STICK.

The Tale of a Faithful Pilgrim.

By J. P. Loughnan.

It was a hot morning in July when Gleeson got his friend Stamford's letter about the lost stick:

Dear Old Man,

I find that I left my walking-stick in London, though I am not sure where. Would you mind running round to the different places where we played billiards during my visit, to see whether you can find it for me? As you know, it is a plain cherry-wood stick, with a crook handle and no mounting of any sort.

Here's to our next merry meeting,

Thine,

J. S. Stamford.

Well, of course, it was up to Gleeson to find the stick, if he possibly could, but it must be set down to his credit that he did a whole morning's sketching before actually setting out on his pilgrimage. Then he turned his attention to the problem of Stamford's loss, and drew up a little memorandum of the places where they had played billiards during his friend's recent visit to town.

They were:

The Three Bells.	The White Dog.
The Fig Leaf.	The Cactus Tree.
The Sceptre.	The Grey Goat.
The Barley Sheaf.	The Sign Post.

The Unicorn.

Gleeson sucked his pencil and pondered. He was confronted with a heavy afternoon's work, and the day was extremely hot. There was a chance, however, that he might run the stick to earth at his very first attempt, and, with this hope in his mind, he set out for the nearest establishment on his list, to wit, the Grey Goat.

Although the stick was not at the Goat, Gleeson was lucky enough to run into Archie Brown, the black and white artist, who happened to be in the neighbourhood of the billiard room as he came in. Their conversation was long and animated, although Gleeson does not now profess to remember exactly what they talked about.

When at length he left the Goat, Gleeson felt on much better terms with himself than before. He had an instinctive feeling that Stamford's stick was at the Fig Leaf, his next destination.

At the Fig Leaf an officer of the merchant service was relating his experiences in foreign parts, and such was the fluency of his narrative that Gleeson forgot to be cross on hearing that Stamford's stick was not in the billiard room. He listened respectfully, and the sea-rover, noting the compliment, addressed himself to this new listener.

"The waves, sir, were enormous," he declared. "They chucked the blooming passengers across the blessed deck like so many dashed ninepins. How we ever came through that monsoon alive I don't know!"

Gleeson, who had it in his mind to paint a seascape for the following year's Academy, took this opportunity of picking up maritime hints. Indeed, the merchantman went so far as to suggest the subject for his painting—a ship standing on her nose with the propellers right above water, and the crew perishing miserably amid giant seas.

On the other hand, Gleeson favoured a derelict, solitary upon the face of the sea at sunset. The question took a lot of discussing, and was still undecided when Gleeson eventually tore himself away from the Fig Leaf.

It must have been at the Three Bells that our pilgrim lost his memorandum with the list of billiard rooms on it. For here it was that he fell in with an argumentative Scotsman, who demanded an illustration of Evolution. In order to make the required sketch the artist drew a pencil from his waistcoat pocket, and, it is feared, dropped his memorandum at the same time.

Stamford's stick was not at the Three Bells.

With a cheerful heart Gleeson now made his way to the Unicorn.

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"I have come to inquire after a stick," he said; "a plain cherry-wood stick, with a crook handle, which a friend of mine left here last week."

"I'm afraid we have found no stick here, sir," a charming young woman in black informed him regretfully.

"Talking of sticks, have you ever been to the Far East?" inquired a bronzed stranger, who was standing next to the artist.

"No, sir, I have not," Gleeson admitted. "But it is one of the ambitions of my life to go there. The colours, I believe, are gorgeous."

"So are the sticks," said the stranger. "You can send your boy into the jungle out there, sir, and he'll come back with half-a-dozen fine Malacca canes, canes that you'd give a couple of guineas for over here, sir!"

"Indeed?" said Gleeson.

"Yes, sir," returned the stranger impressively. "Beautiful clouded canes which you see up West, with gold knobs on top of 'em—those are the sort of sticks you can get in the jungles of Malaya."

"Delightful!" exclaimed Gleeson.

"A Malacca cane, sir," went on the stranger, "is not quite round. It is almost egg-shaped, and, as you know, it has a beautiful surface."

"Beautiful surface," repeated Gleeson dreamily.

"And very nice, too!" put in the charming lady in black, who was standing on the other side of the counter.

This interruption diverted the stranger's attention from Gleeson, and he proceeded to dilate on the beauties of the Far East to the young lady, who listened respectfully. Meanwhile, pictures of the distant jungle floated through the artist's mind, and when he finally left the Unicorn the remarks of the bronzed stranger were uppermost in his thoughts.

It was entirely through a misapprehension that he entered the King's Crown, but, having lost his memorandum, he could not check the names on his list. However, the place repaid a visit, for a number of actors were relating their exploits on the stage, and Gleeson quickly gathered that he was in the presence of some of the leaders of the profession. Their anecdotes were so interesting that for some time Gleeson forgot all about the very existence of Stamford's stick. Then some chance reference to a tour in the East reminded him.

"I came in here to inquire about a stick," he said. The earlier gaiety of the afternoon had passed off now, and he looked very serious and responsible. Hard work always had that effect upon Gleeson.

"A stick, sir?" repeated the lady. (She wore a white silk blouse, he noticed.) "What kind of a stick, sir, and where was it left?"

"It was left in the billiard room last week," he explained.

"Yes, sir; and what sort of a stick was it?"

"It was a lovely Malacca cane," returned Gleeson, "with a gold knob at one end, and a beautiful surface. Like all real Malaccas, it was not quite round, but almost egg-shaped. If you go into the jungles of the Far East, you can cut these canes, free of charge."

"Can you, indeed, sir?" said the lady, much impressed.

"Yes," went on Gleeson reminiscently. "Many a time have I got up in the morning out there, walked into the jungle, and come back with an armful of Malaccas. Think of that!"

"How lovely!" exclaimed the lady in white silk.

"Have you found the stick I'm looking for, my dear madam?" asked Gleeson courteously.

"Well, now, I believe I have," returned the lady. "It was left in the billiard room last Thursday——"

"The very day," put in Gleeson.

"And it just answers your description."

"Good!" said Gleeson.

The lady disappeared, and presently returned with a fine gold-knobbed Malacca cane in her hands.

"Is that the stick?" she asked.

"The very stick!" retorted the delighted artist. "Bring me the money-box and I'll put something in, because you've found it!"

The shades of night were beginning to gather when Gleeson found himself engaged in a heated argument about English poetry at some establishment, the name of which he has since forgotten. He had just concluded a powerful plea for the literary merits of Shelley when a complete stranger approached him in an extremely threatening manner, remarking in a loud voice:

"Sir, you have got my stick!"

Gleeson and his fellow disputants stared at the newcomer in dignified amazement.

"What do you mean, sir?" demanded the artist.

"What I say, sir," retorted the stranger

["STAMFORD'S STICK" continued overleaf.]

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hotly, pointing to the Malacca cane. "That stick is mine. I lost it last week."

"Don't be ridiculous," said Gleeson, his voice trembling with suppressed emotion. "This stick is a real Malacca which I cut in the Malayan jungles one morning before tiffin —you remember, don't you, Collingson?"

"Of course we remember!" exclaimed Gleeson's companions in one breath.

But the stranger only shook his head in a still more threatening way, repeating tediously: "I lost it last week!" He then made two distinct strides in the artist's direction, upsetting a four-legged stool as he did so.

"It's my belief this man's intoxicated!" Gleeson murmured confidentially to his friends, and as he breathed this terrible suspicion a thrill of horror circled the apartment.

The lady in attendance (who wore a green blouse) watched the grim drama with anxious eyes, and sent an urgent message to a beefy-looking gentleman, whose usual position was outside the main entrance to the house. A clerk in a corner nudged his companion, and expressed the opinion that there was going to be "a scrap"; while a stout lady, whose doctor had evidently ordered her regular refreshment of a stimulating nature, exclaimed "Shame!" and proceeded to call for some more medicine, to which she gave the strange name of "Dog's Nose."

Meanwhile the stranger, shaking his fist at Gleeson, repeated: "The stick is mine!"

"Go away, sir," said the artist.

"Give me my stick," cried the stranger.

"If I do, it will be across your head," replied Gleeson, drawing himself up with superb dignity.

The stranger took another step forward. "I insist upon having my stick," he snorted.

Gleeson turned to the assembled company.

"This fellow is a bully," he said.

The stranger came still nearer.

"Will you give me my stick?" he exclaimed.

Gleeson presented the gold knob, but, as the other put out his hand to clasp it, the artist drove that end of the cane, with well-judged firmness, against the fifth button of his enemy's waistcoat.

Without a word, the stranger sat down hastily upon the floor.

"I am going to have some dinner," remarked Gleeson, and, accompanied by the other literary disputants, he went into the street.

The stranger on the floor groaned slightly and turned over on to his left side.

The party dined together at a quiet little restaurant in the wilds of Chelsea, and Gleeson decided to paint a banquet scene as his next Academy picture. He reached home in perfect safety that night. He knows this, because he found himself in bed next morning with a slight headache, which he attributed to the previous day's sketching.

Then he saw Stamford's letter again.

It was the sight of that fateful envelope which stirred the chords of Gleeson's memory. He strove to recall his movements during the afternoon of his long search for Stamford's stick, but it was a puzzling job.

For one thing, he was under the distinct impression that he had actually found the lost stick, and yet, when he came to hunt through his studio, no trace of any stick whatsoever could he discover. What could have happened? The answer was beyond him.

And even when, during the following week, the proprietor of the Café Bluebell produced a gold-knobbed Malacca cane, which he suggested belonged to Gleeson, that worthy only shook his head regretfully, remarking:

"No, it was a plain cherry-wood, with a crook handle and no mounting of any sort."

FLOWER-WISDOM.

He loves me, doesn't love me . . . oh!
How should a foolish daisy know?

He loves me, doesn't love me . . . well,
How can a stupid blossom tell?

He loves me not, he loves me . . . yes!
Oh, clever little flower to guess!

Almey St. John Adcock.

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MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

The Edi'or has rubbed his hands
And furnished forth a golden store,
More than was given away before
By any mags. in many lands.

So turn to page two-forty-one
And read the tidings written there.
Hard by are Picture Puzzles fair;
Get busy solving them—such fun!

£1000 FOR PICTURE PUZZLES.

HAVING perused the burning lines which appear above—written by the office poet, whom I keep in a cupboard in my room for use when necessary—act on them, because, for once in a way, there is sense in the words of a poet. Not only will you participate in an epoch-making event, for the offer of £1000 in prizes by a monthly magazine is, as people used to love to write, "unique in the annals of journalism," but you will stand a chance of securing an attractive nest egg.

I appeal to the sporting instinct that lies sleeping in the breast of every Briton: Who wants a car, a fleet of motor-cycles, a tour of the world, a house of his own, a pearl necklace for his best girl—anything expensive, in fact? Then let him have a shot at our £1000 Picture Puzzles Competition.

Page 241 is your goal, ladies and gentlemen. That's where the money lies. Don't stay here listening to me, but begin on those puzzles NOW. You can return to me later on.

ON OPTIMISM.

Yesterday I was ill, and this office saw nothing of me. Instead of toiling in the midst of the city's grime, I basked in the sunshine of the small village which is my home, and reflected on life in general and my temporary miseries in particular. On the whole, the need for optimism, whatever our circumstances, struck me most.

No one has any business to be depressed, openly at any rate, for then he is imposing his private troubles on other people, which is bad manners and bad policy. And it was in order to give people a safety valve that we started those two pages about making the best of life, which are conducted by a born solver of other people's difficulties who calls himself "Mr. Optimist."

HELP YOURSELF TO JOY!

is the message of "Mr. Optimist." No one but you can do it, but "Mr. Optimist's" mission is to show you how. For years he has been setting up signposts to joy on behalf of young people of both sexes, and he has no equal in this respect.

COMPETITION RESULTS.

May I offer my sincere congratulations to the prizewinners in the "Making Faces" competition, particulars of which were announced in the April ROYAL? The awards are:

First prize (£2 10s.), E. W. Fortune, 5 Park View Terrace, St. George, Bristol; second prize (£1 10s.), Miss D. Cafferata, Harrowby House, Grantham; third prize (£1), S. Fulljames, 6 Hever Gardens, Reginald Road, Maidstone.

A list of the ten consolation prizewinners, who each get 10s., may be seen at this office.

The prize of one guinea offered in the April ROYAL for the best poem on the lines of Mr. Rigby's "Susan's Servitude" goes to

J. C. Brooksby, 54 Friargate, Preston, Lancs.

Some Optimists.

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